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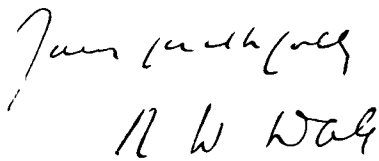

THE

LIFE OF R. W. DALE

OF BIRMINGHAM

BY HIS SON

A. W. W. DALE

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WITH PORTRAIT

LONDON
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27 PATERNOSTER ROW
1898

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I call a man remarkable who becomes a true workman in the vineyard of the Highest. THOMAS CARLYLE.

Filio satis amplum patrimonium memoriam mei nominis relinquo.
CICERO.

21215

PREFACE

BUT for the pleasant duty of thanking those who have helped me in my work, I should not have encumbered this memoir with a preface. As something must be said, may I add a few words of personal explanation?

Let me say at once that the burden of the biographer was one from which I shrank. The sin of Ham lies as an open pit in the way of any son who writes his father's life; and the determination not to say too much may easily lead him to say too little. Had it been possible, therefore, I should have left the task to others. But it soon appeared that the friends—they were but few—who might have undertaken the work were fully occupied in other duties, and that if any memoir were to be written I must write it. And so, accepting a responsibility that I should never have sought, I have tried to discharge it as best I could. The shortcomings, of which I am only too conscious, would have been even greater than they are but for the kindness of those who have come to my aid.

The inherent difficulties were increased by special causes. My father kept no diary, except for two or three short periods far on in life. The men with whom he was most closely associated in public work he met every week. He was in London so often that he had no need to write at length about questions of lasting interest to Dr. Allon, Dr. Guinness Rogers, and his other friends. His inner

life, between the earlier and the later years, he kept to himself. He lived before the world—or alone. It was not until he was withdrawn from active service that he recorded, save in public utterance, the spiritual experiences through which he was passing. My mother, had she been living, would have been able to add many personal details; but her sudden and tragic death, eighteen months ago, has left me without the help that she alone could give.

Adequately to express my obligations to all who have assisted me is impossible. I have to thank Dr. Guinness Rogers, Dr. Fairbairn, Mr. Barber, the Rev. Philip Barker, and Mr. Mander for the portions that they have respectively contributed to this volume, and my friend Dr. Forsyth for many valuable suggestions, and for most generous help in the labour of revision. I am greatly indebted to those who have furnished me with letters, and have allowed me to use them; in many cases, letters that are not printed have been of material service in fixing dates, and in supplying details. Those friends whose names are not included in this list must not imagine that my gratitude is as scanty as my space.

TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE
10th October 1898.

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BOOK I

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL

Robert William Dale—Family—Father and mother—Schooldays at Mr. Wilby's, at Rayleigh, at Mr. Willey's—Mr. Offord—Early essays and first appearances in print—Dr. Campbell, his character and influence—The Theological Class at the Tabernacle—Home influences—Becomes Mr. Willey's assistant.

ROBERT WILLIAM DALE was born in London on 1st December 1829. His father, Robert Dale, was a native of Bocking, a village about a mile from Braintree in Essex. There, and at Coggeshall, the family had been settled for a considerable time. The original stock cannot be traced, but it is certain that the Dales had a strain of foreign blood in them. When the Flemings, driven from the Continent by religious persecution, took refuge in England, many of them established themselves in Essex, bringing their crafts and industries with them. Braintree was the centre of a large and important colony, and they intermarried with many of the families in the neighbourhood—probably with the Dales among the number.

It is possible that the family was connected with Samuel Dale of Bocking, the intimate friend of John Ray, the famous naturalist, himself distinguished by his scientific researches. He began life as an apothecary at Braintree, but in 1730 he became a physician, continuing to practise in the same district. His contributions to Ray's most important works, and his own "Pharmacologia," published in 1690, together with other scientific treatises, secured his election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society. He

was a strong Nonconformist, and was a deacon of the Independent Church at Bocking. A link in the pedigree is missing, and the case is one of probability, not of proof. But there is identity of place, of name, and of principle; and the connection, if admitted, would account for family traditions of an earlier prosperity, which at the end of the last century had already passed away.

Robert Dale left Bocking in his youth, and went to London to seek his fortune, without much success. In the year 1820 he was living at No. 44 Bedfordbury, in the Parish of St. Martin; and a certificate shows that he provided one Charles King to serve as his substitute in the Middlesex Militia. He moved about a good deal, and it is not easy to follow him in his wanderings. He seems for the most part to have kept to the same neighbourhood—the streets near to Finsbury Square and the Moorfields Tabernacle; but at the time when Robert William was born, he had settled on the south side of the river, and was living in Hawkesbury Grove, on the edge of a large open space, now covered with houses, in the Parish of St. Mary, Newington. In the course of a few months, however, he made his way back to Finsbury, and took a house in Clifton Street, where he remained for several years.

He had set up in business as a dealer in hat-trimmings. Silk hats were as yet unknown on this side of the Channel; the beaver of our ancestors still reigned supreme, and he made and supplied the various trimmings which the hat manufacturers required. Had the old fashion continued, he might have made a competence, if not a fortune; but within a few years the beaver was superseded, and trade was turned into other courses.

At the age of two-and-twenty he had married Elizabeth Young, the daughter of a tradesman living in Aldersgate Street, at a house just opposite to Falcon Square. The two families were already connected. Mr. Young, after losing his first wife, Rebecca Yeates—his daughter's mother—had married again; and his second wife was a Dale—Robert Dale's aunt on his father's side.

Neither Robert Dale nor his wife had much schooling, even for their times; but they were intelligent, and understood the value of education. Moreover, in the Yeates family, one of its members—Elizabeth Young's uncle—was a scholar of some distinction; his "Indian Church History" remains to attest his literary interest and industry.[1] His example would count for something; for the presence of even one man of letters in a family is rarely without its effect.

In character and in outward appearance husband and wife presented a striking contrast. He was a man of average height; not in any way noteworthy; reserved and retiring, shunning society rather than seeking it; without the enterprise and the vigour that are required for conspicuous success. She, on the other hand, was small and dark, with an amazing fund of energy and activity, capable of strong enthusiasm herself, and able to stir and inspire others. Both were members of the Tabernacle Church, Moorfields, founded by George Whitefield, then presided over by Dr. John Campbell. They were poor, and did not mix much with their more prosperous neighbours; but they held a distinct position of their own, and the blameless consistency of their life commanded the respect and the regard of those who knew them.

The early part of their married life was full of anxiety and sorrow. Out of six children only two survived—Robert and Thomas—and even they, as might be expected, during childhood were far from robust. Thomas was much the younger; for the ten years before he was born, Robert was the only child in the home, and the mother's affection was concentrated on him with a rare intensity of devotion. The memories of the children that she had lost made her all the more tender to the son who was spared. If she said little, her feeling was all the stronger

[1] "Indian Church History, or An Account of the First Planting of the Gospel in Syria, Mesopotamia, and India, with an accurate relation of the first Christian Missions in China collected from the best authorities extant in the writings of the Oriental and European historians, with genuine and select translations of many original pieces, by Thomas Yeates, London." Printed by A. Maxwell, Bell Yard, Lincoln's Inn, 1818.

for her reticence. Among her few intimate friends she made no secret of her dreams and aspirations. Her one desire for her boy "Bobby," as he was then called, was that he should grow up to be a minister of the Gospel. "One impression remains with me to this day," says the Rev. James Key, "the passionately earnest desire of his mother that he should be a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this she seemed to live; for this she prayed incessantly; for this she laboured; for this she would make any sacrifice. From his birth she gave him to God, and she watched over him with earnest prayer." Her closest friend at that time was a Mrs. Ferris, the elder sister of Dr. Harris, then prominent as a preacher, and President of New College. The Dales and the Ferrises sat side by side in the front row of one of the galleries of the church. Mrs. Dale and Mrs. Ferris had little conferences at the close of the services, while they sat for a time as the congregation retired. They were like-minded women, and although they rarely visited at each other's houses, they drew together at the social meetings of the church. With Mrs. Ferris, and among other friends belonging to the same circle, Mrs. Dale spoke freely of her hopes for her son's future.

The boy himself is but a shadowy figure during these early years. Hardly an incident of his childhood has been recorded. He was not adventurous, and adventures did not come in his way. One friend describes him as wearing a white pinafore and a black belt, and recalls the invariable punctuality with which he set off homewards at the time fixed by his mother. Another adds that he was never to be seen with a hoop in the streets or playing about with the children of the neighbourhood. His first school—and he must have gone to school early—was in Worship Square. It was kept by a Mr. Wilby, who followed the Pestalozzian system. The teaching was good, and the impression that it left was permanent; for fifty years after, Dale expressed his indebtedness to the training that he had received there, though he did not explain whether its merits were due to special methods of

instruction or to its effect in stimulating the mind. He was already quick and intelligent. Two or three of the books that he then used have been preserved. There is a Aged 9.
little French Testament with an inscription, half in French, half in English—"Monsieur Dale, pupil of Monsieur Wilby, Pestalozzian Academy, Worship Square." Below, the owner's name is repeated in Greek characters, roughly traced and evidently the work of a beginner. A copy of *The Marrow of Modern Hymn Books*—edited by Dr. Campbell, in its day largely used in Sunday schools and Bible classes—belongs to the same period. His handwriting at that time—he was not quite ten—is clear and firm for his age. There is also a little volume of poetry bearing the same date—"R. W. Dale, 1839." It contains Blair's "Grave," Gray's "Elegy," and "Death, a Poem by Beilby Porteus, Bishop of London"—not a very cheerful collection and not too flattering to Gray.

A few months later he was taken away from the Pestalozzian Academy, and was sent to a school at Rayleigh in Aged 10.
Essex. The change was not a success. The master had no real aptitude for his work; he did not impress his scholars, nor did he understand them. Fifteen or sixteen years later, his former pupil, bringing his wife with him —it was soon after his marriage—called on him, but met with a most ungracious reception. All that the old pedagogue would say was that he was glad to see "untoward boys turning out well." The phrase was never forgotten, and in describing the incident to an old schoolfellow forty years after, Dale adds with humorous indignation: "Untoward boys turning out well! The old wretch! He had not done much towards it; and my only sin—so far as he knew—was that I did not think so well of him as of my former master. And so far as his brains were concerned, I was right."

In 1840—or early in 1841—the Dales moved from Clifton Street into Earl Street. The house which they occupied was then number 12 in the street, but is now number 16. Robert was at once removed from Rayleigh, and was placed in the school kept by Mr. John Tyson

Willey at 3 Christopher Street, a few hundred yards away from his home. The school was one of considerable
Aged 11. repute, attended by the sons of clergymen, doctors, and tradesmen living in and around Finsbury Square, which at that time had not become a mere business quarter. Some of the boys had come to it from public schools, such as the Merchant Taylors' and St Paul's, where the education was almost exclusively classical, to learn writing and arithmetic and similar subjects which at those historic foundations were scandalously neglected. Mr. Willey's was essentially a commercial school: more time was given to French than to Latin; but mathematics were carefully taught. The school was large and successful. Its numbers touched the hundred. Not a few of its pupils distinguished themselves in after life. Its prosperity was due to the energy and the perception of its head. He understood boys, and had a keen insight into character. In those days a lad chose his calling—or had it chosen for him—at an earlier age than is common now, and Mr. Willey in his teaching took careful account of the career for which his scholars were intended. He had the faculty of making friends of his boys and their parents, by whom he was regarded with affection and confidence. His advice was freely sought and—what is more rare—was followed. Time and separation increased rather than lessened the gratitude of his scholars. In his old age, Mr. Willey, after retiring from his calling, outlived his resources. He had already been presented with a handsome testimonial; but his old pupils, on learning his circumstances, clubbed together, and provided an annuity which was his chief support during the last fourteen years of his life. The heartiness with which the plan was taken up and carried out was a remarkable tribute to the lasting effect of his character and influence. Excellent as it was in many ways, the school necessarily lacked some of the elements that assist in developing mind and character. The teaching though vigorous and stimulating, was confined within comparatively narrow limits. Opportunities of culture—in the larger sense—were all too slight. The place had

no such traditions, no such associations, as ennoble our great public schools; nor did it know that large and generous activity which is to be found in the modern foundations of our great cities. It did not reach back into the past; it did not closely touch the present. It could boast no brilliant names to be at once the pride and the inspiration of succeeding generations. But it had at least this merit—that if little was attempted, the little was well done; that such knowledge as it imparted was solid and thorough; and that the moral tone of the place was sound and wholesome.

In spite of its limitations, the school had a life of its own, in which a lad might learn as much from his companions as from his teachers. There was a playground at the back of the building; and although games had not then become a passion, the schoolboy was not without his diversions. In the rougher sports and pastimes of the place Dale seldom took part. He did not excel either in speed or strength, and was no athlete; he always cared more for books than for play. But at the same time he was not so separated from the rest of the school as to be unsocial, and whenever a boy found himself in difficulties over his lessons, with a problem to solve or a passage to construe, no one was more ready to give assistance; and, as in attainments he was far in advance of most of his schoolfellows, his aid was as freely sought as it was freely given. With some of the boys he was brought into more close and intimate association—especially with two brothers, George and John Offord. The Offords and the Dales were neighbours, and the children spent much of their playtime together. The influence which this friendship exerted upon a boy who had lived too much alone was very great; it brought a new force to bear upon him, and a force making wholly for good. Fifty years later, in an address delivered at Mill Hill School, Dale described the brothers and what they had done for him:—

A great many years ago, when I was quite a little boy, among my schoolfellows I had two brothers, who, between them,

illustrated what then seemed to me, and what still seems to me, the ideal of boyish excellence. The younger of them had singular gentleness, kindness, sympathy; he was strong, but his strength had no roughness in it; his spirit and manner were always affectionate, gracious, and beautiful. The elder, who died in early manhood, was frank, bold, courageous, and adventurous. The younger brother left England soon after I entered the ministry. I met him more than thirty years later in a distant part of the world, and I shall never forget his emotion when I told him how much I owed to him. Neither of them knew at that time how much they were doing for me; but to those two schoolfellows of mine I am under far larger moral obligations than to any of my teachers.

This was not the only help he gained from the friendship. At the Offords' house in Clifton Street there was a large unused room at the end of the yard, which was given up to the two boys and their younger sister. They kept their tools and playthings there, and it was a fine place for games. Here the children and their friend spent many an hour; and then, when tired of play, they would leave their games and come and stand by Mr. Offord's bench—he was a saddler and harness-maker,—watching him while he cut out work for his men, and listening while he talked of many things. He was a man with wide interests, well read in prose and poetry, full of ideas, free and apt in expression. He would question the boys upon any topic that interested them, would draw out their ideas, help them to discover the extent of their knowledge, and then send them off to write an essay or a paper on the subject. These essays, written not as a task, but for pleasure, were Dale's first efforts at composition; and it was to Mr. Offord—as he told a friend long afterwards—that he owed his earliest impulse towards literature. When Mr. Offord died in 1877, Dale wrote to his daughter, recalling his debt:—

26th April 1877.

Your father had so great a place in all my memories of my early days that with his death a piece of my own life seems to have gone. He was very kind to me. I wonder how it was that a man with all his power and resources could have been so

kind to a lad. . . . I should find it hard to say for how much of my own preaching he was responsible; his conversations with me about his two great preachers, Mr. Binney and Alfred Morris, made impressions on me which must have done a great deal to shape my whole way of thinking about the preacher's work.

It was no doubt through such prompting and encouragement that he made his first appearance in print. He was about twelve years old at the time.

It was rather an audacious proceeding, for there were no children's columns in those days. But a thought had come to me—I cannot tell how—about the difference in idea between the Lord's Day and the Jewish Sabbath—the Jewish Sabbath commemorating the creation of the world; the Christian Sunday—the Lord's Day—commemorating the resurrection of our Lord, which was the beginning of the new creation; the one giving "rest" from past labours, the other renewing life and strength for labours yet to come. The difference took possession of me. I thought of it day after day. At last I came to the conclusion that it was worth making known to others, and so, in my very best writing, I sent it to the editor of the *Youth's Magazine*. He inserted my brief contribution, which did not occupy more than an inch and a half or two inches of his space.[1] I have no doubt that the success of this juvenile "article" was chiefly owing to its extreme brevity. I said what I had to say in the fewest possible words, and then said no more. . . .

My next venture had a certain comic element in it. Dr. Campbell, the pastor of the church to which my father and mother belonged, and which I generally attended while I remained at home, had just launched the *Christian Witness*, a threepenny monthly magazine. It had an immense success. If I remember aright, it secured, at starting, a circulation of 30,000 copies, which in those days was unprecedented in the history of religious periodicals. Those of us who belonged to Dr. Campbell's congregation thought that the success of the *Christian Witness* was the great ecclesiastical event of the century; we had some encouragement in thinking so from Dr. Campbell himself. I was about thirteen years old—perhaps fourteen,—and I thought that it would be a great thing to write something that would be read by 30,000 people; for in those days I imagined that everybody that bought a magazine would be sure to read it. But I felt certain that if the doctor knew that any article sent to him for the great magazine was mine, he would think me the most

[1] *Youth's Magazine*, November 1842, p. 368.

presumptuous member of the human race; and I am not sure that I did not believe that he would be right. So I sent my little article—it was longer than my first, but still very short—anonymously, and signed it "Gaius," which was a common signature for old men to use in religious magazines in those days. What the article was about I cannot remember, but the great editor appeared to think that his aged contributor had sent him something which deserved the attention of his 30,000 subscribers; and in the course of a few weeks I saw the contribution of "Gaius" in the *Christian Witness*.[1]

In these reminiscences Dale's memory—as was only natural after an interval of fifty years—is sometimes at fault. The little article in the *Youth's Magazine*—his first literary venture—is even shorter than he supposed; only three lines—thirty words—all told. Some of the ideas that he attributes to it are of later growth: there is, for instance, no reference to the contrast between "rest" and "renewal." And he had evidently forgotten the signature—"Rupert." The second article, with which Dr. Campbell was hoaxed, cannot have been written till he was about fourteen and a half; for the *Christian Witness* first appeared in the year 1844. No contribution by "Gaius" appears in the early numbers of the magazine; so that the article must have been published without the signature; it cannot now be identified.

The reference to the *Christian Witness* suggests that no account of the influences which went to shape the boy's character would be complete without some mention of the Tabernacle Church and its minister, Dr. John Campbell, who at John Wilks's death had succeeded to the pastorate. Time has dealt hardly with him. For many years his ministry was powerful and effective. He was respected, if not beloved, by the members of the two congregations at Moorfields and in Tottenham Court Road over which he presided. But his voice failed him before his strength, and he then forsook the pulpit and threw himself into literary work. His activity was boundless. He edited the official organs of Congregationalism, and also started

1 "Number Ten," a magazine published by the Young Men's Bible Class at Carr's Lane, Birmingham: April 1894.

periodicals of his own. The power that he thus came to exercise was very large, and it was used without moderation or wisdom. It was a time of unrest, and men of the younger race could not fail to be affected by new ideas in criticism and theology. Dr. Campbell imagined that it was his special mission to resist the movement. He was combative, and delighted in controversy. If he lacked learning, he had great activity of mind and was full of resource. He contended for the faith—as he understood it—with a passionate ardour; but in his contention he was too often violent and too seldom just. At last the fate that always awaits men who fight for truth in such a temper overtook him: he degenerated into a heresy-hunter,—dogmatic, denunciatory, vindictive,—a thousand times more hurtful to the cause that he championed than the most persistent of its avowed opponents. And so it has come about that his virtues and his services are all but forgotten, and that he is remembered only as a type of blatant and abusive bigotry. But in the later thirties and in the earlier forties this stage had not been reached. Dr. Campbell, if he was already an editor, had not ceased to be a preacher; and his preaching was not without effect: it certainly had a part in stirring the religious interests and in shaping the religious convictions of the lad who listened to him Sunday by Sunday, sitting by his father and mother in the north gallery of the church.

Some points of resemblance between the two men are worth noting. Untiring industry, the energy with which literary activity and the work of the pulpit were combined, the habit of expounding whole passages, and even books of Scripture rather than separate and isolated texts, a readiness to attack great subjects, and a militant loyalty to Congregational principles, were characteristics that Dale shared with his first pastor. How far the similarity was accidental, and how far due to the unconscious influence of example, it is impossible to say. But there need be no hesitation in tracing to this source the first exuberance of his literary style and the dogmatic temper of his youth and early manhood.

It was not, however, to Dr. Campbell alone that Dale owed his early religious training. For some time he attended the catechetical class established for the children of church members who were sufficiently advanced to receive instruction in doctrine; provision was made in a separate school for those who were ignorant of the elements of the Scriptures. There he learned the Assembly's Catechism, and won a prize for proficiency. In due time—but while he was still a boy—he was promoted to the theological class held in the vestry, established by Mr. Childs, and at a later date conducted by Mr. William Stroud. His interest in such studies was keen from the first, and it is clear that he was strongly attracted by the new domain of thought now opened before him. His sense of indebtedness to his teachers and companions—for the members of the class were expected to take part in exposition and illustration—was deep and enduring; and the first of his books, *The Talents*, is dedicated to "Mr. William Stroud and the Bible Class conducted by him, as an imperfect expression of the author's gratitude." [1]

In the home there was nothing to impair the force of these influences. The parents, indeed, were poor; luxury was unknown; even books were few. But they had a genuine regard for knowledge, and valued it for its own sake, not merely for the rewards and the advancement that it might bring. Any sign of intellectual development, any extension of mental interest, was encouraged. The sympathy of friends was welcomed; their suggestions were never disparaged with that narrow-minded selfishness which is far too common. They were proud, the mother especially, of the possibilities and the promise of their son. But theirs was not a demonstrative household. It had

[1] The superintendent of the Bible Class must not be identified with William Stroud, M.D., the author of a well-known work on *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ* (London, Hamilton and Adams, 1847), to which reference is made in the *Lectures on the Atonement* (pp. 462, foll.). He was a neighbour of the Dales, by trade a shoemaker, eminently distinguished by spiritual knowledge and power. The two men have, in one instance at least, been confused.

too little warmth or sunshine, and it was too much inclined to reserve where frank and open expression would have been both natural and wholesome. But affection, however tongue-tied and inarticulate, was deep and strong; nor was family life embittered by alienation or distrust. Simplicity, integrity, and a robust religious faith, contributed to develop solidity and strength of character.

Such, then, are the facts that have been preserved relating to the years of Dale's boyhood. The exact range of his studies is uncertain. All that can be said with certainty is that he must have learnt Latin, French, a little Greek, and a fair amount of mathematics, in addition to the English subjects which were carefully taught in Mr. Willey's school; and it is safe also to add that he read widely on his own account, acquiring an amount of miscellaneous knowledge most unusual for a boy of his age. In the summer of 1843 his school days, as a pupil, came to an end; but he remained with Mr. Willey for six months more, until the end of the year, as an assistant, or usher, as he would then be called, taking part in the teaching and receiving from the principal some private help in his own studies in return for his services. One incident, to which he once or twice referred when talking of his boyhood, shows that he already exerted much authority. Mr. Willey, for some cause or other, was absent, not merely from his classes but from his house, for three days; but, with the help of another pupil, his young assistant carried on the work of the school without interruption or even irregularity. He must have looked older than he was, and must have been exceptionally mature in manner to make such a position tolerable. "A tall, swarthy lad, in spectacles, sitting at the usher's desk, and looking as if he meant to be minded, *as he was*,"—such is the picture which remains of him half a century after.

Aged 13½.

CHAPTER II

FROM ANDOVER TO SPRING HILL

Leaves home for Andover—Religious difficulties—Joins the Church—Religious work—First sermon—Magazine articles—Desires to enter the ministry—Disappointed hopes—At Brixton Hill—Correspondence with Mr. Gillespie the metaphysician—An usher at Leamington—Village preaching—Publishes *The Talents*—Friends at Leamington—Applies for admission to Spring Hill College—Difficulties removed—Examined and admitted—First impressions of the College.

Aged 14. IT was in January 1844 that Dale left home to begin life on his own account. He had been engaged as assistant by Mr. Ebenezer White, a schoolmaster at Andover, a little country-town in Hampshire. There cannot be much doubt as to the way in which the arrangement was brought about. The Rev. J. Spencer Pearsall, the minister of the Congregational Church there which Mr. White attended, had been a member of the Tabernacle Church. Through Dr. Campbell an introduction was given, and Mr. White came up to London for an interview before concluding the arrangement. He found Dale engrossed in Butler's *Analogy*, and thought it "rather a deep book for such a youth." The impression which he received was favourable, and it was arranged that the engagement should begin at the end of the Christmas holidays.

In many respects the position was admirably suited for a lad leaving home for the first time. Mr. White himself was a man of high character and of kindly disposition. If he had no claim to exact scholarship, his general knowledge was exceptionally wide; for he had studied men as well as books, and had travelled not only on the

Continent but in South America, at a time when travellers were comparatively rare. He was generous and benevolent; poverty and suffering did not appeal to him in vain. Though at that time he was not a minister, he took an active part in the work of the church, and preached occasionally, if not regularly, at the service held on Sunday afternoons. He subsequently gave up educational work and took charge of a village church in Berkshire. To his young assistant he was kindly and considerate. The influences of the school were favourable to the development of mind and character; and the burden of work was not too severe.

But schoolmastering never was, and never could have been, Dale's true vocation. At Andover he did his best to discharge his duties, and not without success; but the work was essentially uncongenial. For individual boys—the sons of his friends, and others whom he came to know in after years—he had a genuine affection; but both by temperament and training he was incapable of comprehending the habits and tastes of the typical schoolboy, a creature with riotous animal spirits, regulating life by a complex but irregular moral code of his own, and with an instinctive dislike of any intellectual exertion. Dulness he could endure—regarding it as an affliction; what he could not tolerate or understand was the absolute and unfeigned indifference to knowledge and the contempt for literature in all its forms which are engrained in nineteen schoolboys out of twenty. But he was not unpopular with his pupils; they knew that he bore them no ill-will; they could always reckon on his readiness to help them in a difficulty. One of them still has "a very distinct recollection of the kindness and geniality of his disposition, and of his great industry as a student." With two day-boys named Tasker he became very intimate, and he spent much of his time out of school-hours in their father's house, finding a cordial welcome among the older people. The position, with all its drawbacks, was not intolerable, and the eighteen months at Andover were by no means the least happy period in his early life.

His first year there saw a momentous crisis in his spiritual history. His religious instincts indeed had been stirred many months before. He had already set out on the search, had begun to strive after the great discovery. It was never his habit to say much about himself in his public utterances, but the references to these early experiences are full and complete enough to make it possible to trace the path along which he found his way into the light. As far as possible, the history shall be given in his own words. "A sermon by the Rev. J. Sherman, which I heard when about thirteen, suggested thoughts about God, and my relation to Him, which were new as being practical, and awakened anxieties which lasted for many months."[1] The preaching of Dr. Campbell helped to keep alive this impression, but failed to bring the peace that he sought; and he then turned to John Angell James's *Anxious Enquirer*, a book of almost unparalleled influence in the religious literature of this century. "I read it," he says, "on my knees, and in keen distress about my personal salvation. Night after night I waited with eager impatience for the house to become still, that in undisturbed solitude I might agonise over the book which had taught so many to trust in God."[2]

But still the trouble lasted; peace and assurance were still withheld. He was perplexed, baffled, distressed, almost in despair. He believed in Christ—of that he was sure—but to no purpose. What, he asked himself, was amiss in his faith? Was his belief not of the right kind? Did he not believe in the right way? Misled by the chapter on "Knowledge" in the *Anxious Enquirer*, he had confused belief in Christ with belief in certain great doctrines about Christ; failing to recognise, as he afterwards discovered, that faith in a person and the acceptance of facts or doctrines relating to a person are two distinct things.

I continued to suppose that I was to be saved by believing the history of the Lord Jesus Christ and the great Evangelical

[1] *Ordination Services of the Rev. R. W. Dale*, pp. 31, 32.
[2] *Life of John Angell James*, pp. 288, 289.

doctrines concerning His nature and death. Conscious that I had not attained the rest and strength which ought to follow "saving faith," I began to think that perhaps my belief was powerless because it was the mere result of education, and not of independent inquiry. Under this impression, I turned in my boyish simplicity to Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*, hoping that when I had verified for myself the historical foundations of Christian truth, my belief would rest on a right basis and exert greater power.[1]

Even then the quest was not over; the dawn still delayed.

I thought that, perhaps, if I believed in Christ at all, I did not believe in the right way; but then, how was I to discover the right way? This set me off on metaphysical adventures, which yielded no discoveries of the kind I wanted. At last—how, I cannot tell—all came clear; I ceased thinking of myself and of my faith, and thought only of Christ; and then I wondered that I should have been perplexed for even a single hour.[2]

In the early summer of 1844 he was received into the Congregational church meeting in East Street, Andover, and he at once began to take an active part in its life and work. Boy as he was, the gift of intercessory prayer—however undeveloped and immature—was already his, and an old member of the church still recalls a prayer which he offered at the close of a Sunday evening sermon. "It deeply impressed" her "by its fervour and appropriateness—especially as he was then a youth wearing a round jacket." He also gave short addresses in the Sunday School, which were much appreciated. In the course of a few months he was encouraged to try his capacity for more ambitious forms of service. Aged 14½.

Andover was a place rich in Nonconformist traditions. The church-roll of the eighteenth century contained the names of men distinguished by rank and learning. But to a lad of generous temper, overflowing with ardour and

[1] *Life of John Angell James*, p. 301.

[2] *The Epistle of James and other Discourses*, pp. 264, 265; cf. pp. 205, 206. Elsewhere (*Ordination Services*, p. 32) it appears that a sermon of the Rev. Alfred Morris on "Christ the Spirit of Christianity" helped to remove the difficulties and misapprehensions with which he had been contending.

enthusiasm, the tales which men still living could tell of their efforts to carry the Gospel into the neighbouring villages, and of the fierce resistance they had encountered, must have been far more thrilling than any records of a remote and shadowy past. Thirty years before, the village of Abbott's Ann, at no great distance from the town, had witnessed a bitter and prolonged conflict. A blacksmith in the village began to hold services in his house, and obtained help from Andover. An attempt was made to put down the movement by violence and outrage; how intense the strife became is shown by the legends of miraculous intervention to which it gave rise. At length, opposition, having exhausted its resources, gradually died down, and the "Methodists"—as they would be called—were left in undisturbed possession.[1] It was a battle on a very humble scale, but typical of a conflict that was then being waged in many parts of rural England. The men who had faced the risk of being stoned, beaten, or ducked, who had lost their cottages, or had been turned out of their farms for conscience sake, when they told the story of those eventful years, must have shone with the dignity of heroism; and their influence gave vigour and passion to the convictions of the younger generation that listened to them.

Aged 15½.

Mr. White was not the man to repress the zeal of his assistant, and Dale began to preach in the spring of 1845, either in April or May. His first sermon was delivered in a room at Providence Cottage, Lower Clatford, then occupied by a basket-maker named Rolf. The text was taken from Ezekiel xviii. 29: "O house of Israel, are not my ways equal?" and the sermon was a defence of Calvinism, coupled, however, with an assertion of universal redemption. He preached for the second time in the little chapel at Abbott's Ann, which had been built some years before by the father of his friends, the Taskers. His preaching attracted a good deal of attention. He was not timid in attacking great subjects. He had read

[1] *Outlines of Congregationalism, with an Historical Account of its Rise and Progress in the Town of Andover*, by the Rev. J. S. Pearsall. London, 1844.

and thought much for a lad of his age. His self-possession was remarkable, and he was never at a loss for words. But, as he often returned to Andover during his college course, and preached whenever he came, there can be no doubt that it was the impression produced in those later years that has survived in the memory of those who listened to him. Yet already it was clear that he was made for the pulpit, and that only as a preacher of the gospel would he find the work for which he was best fitted.

His surplus energies were not confined to preaching. It was a period of growth and activity for all his faculties; and about this time he also began his first systematic attempts in literature. During the earlier months of 1845 he contributed a series of articles to the *Young Men's Magazine*, distinguished by two characteristics —the vigour with which they are written, and their practical intention. They aim at definite objects. They are the utterances of one who has a message to deliver. The subjects are suggestive in themselves. The importance of study—the duty of Bible reading —the claims of God to an unreserved consecration of all our powers—the value of decision of character, are not the themes that would be chosen for purposes of literary display; nor are they so treated in these essays. The writer thinks more of life than of books; he is only too much in earnest, and sometimes his fervour gets the better of his discretion. It was Dale's own impression that he also, about the same time, published some articles in the *Student*. If so, the contributions were unsigned, and all trace of them has been lost. But he cannot have written much; for in the summer of 1845 the *Student* and the *Young Men's Magazine* were amalgamated, and till then his leisure time must have been fully occupied with the series of articles already described. It is possible, however, that a review of Channing's essay on "Self-Culture," which appeared in the April number of the *Student*, may have been his work; it is certain that he reviewed the book in the *Evangelical Magazine* two months later.[1]

[1] *Evangelical Magazine*, June 1845, pp. 296, 297.

So far, this review was his most ambitious achievement; for in those days the *Evangelical Magazine* held an important place in religious life and thought, and its contributors for the most part were men of reputation and position. The article filled two closely printed columns. Its deficiencies are obvious: it is rough in style, and awkward in expression. But it has a distinct unity of aim and thought: it is all of one piece. The writer gets on to the target at once—and keeps there. The criticism throughout is directed, not to details, but to principles; it is outspoken and at the same time respectful. Channing had contended that Self-Culture was the duty of a rational being, for the realisation of his own perfection; his critic insists that God—not self—is the end of man's existence, and that the full development of the faculties with which man has been endowed is due to the Creator who made him what he is. Mind—in his view—is truly honourable only as it answers the great purpose for which it was given: without God and the knowledge of God it never reaches its highest dignity and worth. He also criticises Channing's general conception of human nature, which—so he asserts—disregards the enmity that exists between the natural and the spiritual man, and therefore anticipates moral and spiritual results from the culture of self that can be attained only by union with and knowledge of God. The article is not a long one, but it goes to the root of the matter.

In the course of a few months—at the end of June—he left Andover, and returned home, probably with the idea of preparing himself for the duties of the ministry. No one was less likely to make light of the necessity of systematic training to fit him for that high vocation. He knew enough to know how much he had still to learn. It is clear that both he and his parents reckoned upon Dr. Campbell's help, and assumed that he would open the way into one of the colleges established to prepare students for the Congregational ministry. It was natural that they should indulge such hopes. The parents had been associated with the Tabernacle Church for many years.

Poor as they were, they stood high in the respect of their fellow-members. Their son's character was blameless; his abilities were recognised as of no common order. But to their surprise and mortification, Dr. Campbell, when approached, either declined to do what was necessary, or showed such indifference as amounted to a refusal. The Dales were indignant, and their friends—including some of the elders of the church—sympathised with their feeling. But Dr. Campbell was both oracle and autocrat among his people. He would have his own way, and was not lightly to be turned from it by argument or appeal.

There is no reason to blame him for his conduct. He was a busy man, with many absorbing interests, overburdened with work and responsibility; and it is possible that he may not have given much attention to the facts of the case. And to a superficial observer the project might well seem unreasonable or premature. The lad was still several months under sixteen; his intentions and desires might change as he approached manhood. As yet, his qualification for the work of the ministry had hardly been tested; it was only right that he should show what he had in him; that his tenacity of purpose should be proved, before any effort was made to remove the obstacles in his path; and that the call to the ministry should come from the church, in response to ability and devotion displayed in some form of Christian work, and not merely from his own impulse and the encouragement of admiring relations. Such considerations as these would occur to any pastor of experience; and prudence would suggest caution and delay. But the advice might have been graciously given. A word of sympathy would have softened the disappointment, and have left some hope for the future. But this was not Dr. Campbell's way; the rebuff was unqualified, and conveyed the impression that his disapproval was final.

It must have been a sad summer in Earl Street. Everything combined to embitter the trial. The prospect had appeared so bright, sympathy and help seemed so secure, the promise of usefulness and power was so

distinct, that the blow, when it came, was overwhelming—to the mother who saw her long cherished hopes so suddenly destroyed, and to the son who found himself compelled to return to a calling from which he thought he had escaped. But no other course was open; and he had to take up school work again with what heart he could. So in August 1845 he engaged himself as an assistant to Mr. Jardine, who then conducted a school at Brixton Hill. The arrangement—as might have been anticipated—did not prove very successful. Mr. Jardine no doubt soon discovered that his assistant had no intention, if he could help it, of spending his life as a schoolmaster, and that his mind was busy with other things. A relation of Mr. Jardine tells us nothing more than the truth when she says: "At that time Mr. Dale's thoughts were so constantly fixed on his entrance to the ministry that he did not apply himself so much to teaching the pupils as he would otherwise have done." The statement does not necessarily imply disloyalty to the principal, or disregard of duty. Common experience proves that no man can succeed as a teacher who comes to his work with a divided mind. And Mr. Jardine was evidently too considerate to require—as he might fairly and reasonably have required—that all other plans should, for the time at least, be abandoned. He did not even put a stop to pulpit work, and his assistant preached, certainly once at Brixton Hill, and probably in other places also. His mind was at the same time absorbed in many other interests.

To pass over other matters, he was then undergoing that first attack of metaphysics which few young men of active intelligence wholly escape. In his case it seems to have taken an acute form, and a correspondence which has been preserved shows that it inspired him with unusual temerity.

While he was in this state of intellectual ferment, a book written by Mr. William Gillespie, a Scotch metaphysician, fell into his hands, and he read it with the keenest interest. The volume contained several treatises, all directed to the same end—to establish the necessary

existence of God by the *a priori* method of reasoning, and was intended primarily to deal with positive atheism. With arguments derived from experience—inferences from the evidence of design in creation, and the methods of experimental philosophy in general—Mr. Gillespie was dissatisfied. He quotes Hume against the *a posteriori* school; the cause, he urges, ought only to be proportioned to the effect; we are not justified, therefore, in attributing to the cause qualities which do not belong to the effect. The effect, so far as it falls under our cognisance, is not infinite; indeed, to reason in this way is to "renounce all claim to infinity in the attributes of the Deity"; or, as Mr. Martineau has said, "We can only speak of the Divine perfection as indefinitely great."[1] Starting, therefore, from the opposite standpoint—from man, and not from the universe, from the intuitive ideas of the mind, and not from the evidence of the senses—Mr. Gillespie elaborated "the argument, *a priori*, for the Being and attributes of a Great First Cause." He proceeds with mathematical precision, building up his argument in a series of propositions, with dependent corollaries and scholia. Setting out from the ideas of Infinite Extension and Infinite Duration, as necessarily existing—"for everything the existence of which we cannot but believe is necessarily existing"—he advances, step by step, till he concludes that there necessarily exists a Being Infinite in Expansion and Duration, of absolute unity and simplicity, intelligent and omniscient, all-powerful, entirely free, completely happy, and perfectly good. The treatise is a signal illustration of the principle that metaphysics and theology are inseparable, and that the moment we go beyond phenomena and apply ourselves to causes, we find ourselves in a transcendental region.[2] The young metaphysician read the book; and not only read it but tried his strength upon it. He worked out a clearer proof, as it seemed to him, of the first proposition—that infinity of extension is necessarily existing; and also raised an objection to a

[1] *A Study of Religion*, vol. i. p. 415.
[2] *Ibid.*, Preface, pp. i. ii.

proposition in the second part of the treatise ; the objection affected not method merely but validity, and in an argument so constructed — in which the conclusion of one stage becomes the premiss of the next—a single weak point breaks the continuity, and leaves the fabric to collapse.

Without entering fully into the question at issue, it is enough to say that the objection, if sound, would have admitted the possibility of the material universe being the substratum of Infinity of Duration ; and for the purposes of the argument it was necessary to prove that the material universe could not be the substratum either of Infinity of Extension or of Infinity of Duration.

Mr. Gillespie took the criticism sedately — in fact, seriously ; and he encouraged his correspondent to state his difficulties. He received five letters in answer to his appeal, and wrote three. They are too long to reproduce, and are too much concerned with details and too full of technicalities to be generally interesting, or indeed intelligible apart from the book, but their nature and character may be briefly indicated. There is extreme earnestness on both sides. Mr. Gillespie, it is evident, regarded himself as the apostle of a faith, and his correspondent—who at this time was not quite sixteen—was able to meet him in the same spirit. Mr. Gillespie spares no pains in dealing with difficulties. His tone and temper are admirable—free from any affectation of infallibility ; only once is there any trace of warmth—when he finds that his correspondent is inclined to regard time as a purely mental idea,—as a mode of consciousness alone, and not as externally real,—so "agreeing with Kant and other German metaphysicians." He adds, and not without justice, that any one holding such convictions is bound to challenge his argument as a whole, and to demur to its reasoning at the very outset. But he writes throughout with cordiality and something more — an unfeigned desire to establish religious faith on a solid basis, and to bring heart and mind into harmonious unity. Dale's letters are remarkable in many ways.

His style was still unformed, but his resources of expression were considerable, and although he writes, not only modestly but diffidently of his knowledge and abilities, it is clear that he is already accustomed to look at things with his own eyes, to examine evidence for himself, to accept no reasoning simply on the score of reputation and authority. As to his metaphysical aptitude, all that need be said is that metaphysical interest is so rare in a lad of his age as to be almost startling. His system of thought has not yet rejected incongruous elements; in Carlyle's phrase he is "a young unhewn philosopher." Like all beginners in metaphysics, he is not very firm on his feet; and, as with a young skater, they are apt to shoot out in opposite directions at the same time. But in the discussion he gives proof of force and courage, and though at the close he admits himself to be convinced, there can be no doubt that the discussion must have been of far greater value to him than any positive conclusion to which he may have been led. The experience taught him to rely more confidently on his own powers; and the first step towards success is the conviction that success is possible. After his recent disappointment, the discovery that a man of reputation and learning was willing to deal with him seriously must have braced him like a tonic, and have filled him with new hope and courage.

This was not the only adventure of the autumn. Not content with tackling a philosopher, he also entered into controversy with a Roman Catholic bishop. The incident is described at length in one of his letters.

To Mr. Offord

Leamington, *January* 30, 1846.

In November last my colleague and I read a pastoral letter of the Bishop Hoogdinke, Apostolic Vicar of some diocese with a queer denomination in Holland. This letter breathed all the fiendish spirit of Catholicism against the efforts of the Bible Society, and though I could not but abhor the principles which

formed the staple of the document, there was much that appeared amiable, fatherly, Christian. Accordingly Mr. Stroud and I sat down and wrote a long letter to his Holiness the Bishop, exposing in as kind a spirit as possible his errors, requesting a reply, and beseeching him to pray that not only he but ourselves might know the truth. A few days ago, a letter arrived at Brixton directed to Messrs. Stroud and Dale, which was really a communication from the Catholic Bishop. He endeavours to prove the right of dominion asserted by the ecclesiastical members of the Popish Church, rightly observing that this is the fundamental principle, which is the *sine qua non* to all their doctrines. Its spirit is exceedingly affectionate; and, at the conclusion, he tells us that, faith being the gift of God, he will ever offer his humble though earnest prayers that, as we have received grace to seek truth, we may be guided in the way of truth, and that he has directed his most pious priests to do the same. Well, the answers to their prayers are yet to come.

Whatever may have been the cause of the change, it is quite clear that even before he left Brixton, the pang of disappointment was beginning to pass away, and when,
Aged 16. early in the New Year 1846, he settled at Leamington, as assistant to Mr. Müller, a schoolmaster in Warwick Street, he rapidly recovered buoyancy and vigour. His first impressions, indeed, of his new surroundings are not very cheerful. It was a plunge into a strange world. He found himself cut off from his friends, and surrounded by strangers. As for real sympathy—so far as the school was concerned—he sought it in vain. Mr. Müller agreed with him in principle, but without conviction or enthusiasm; and to ardent youth a downright foe is more welcome than a lukewarm friend. His colleague—according to his estimate—both in intellect and character was a poor creature, from whom little intimacy or fellowship could be expected; and he missed the companionship of John Stroud,—"my chum," as he calls him,—with whom he had been closely associated at Brixton. Of the school itself he speaks favourably. When he went there it numbered "about twenty boarders and thirty day boys," "varying in age from eight to eighteen," for the most part amiable, "with considerable intelligence," though "lamentably ignorant of religious truth"—a failing

which, he hopes, "will not long continue, if my endeavours to inform their minds and to affect their hearts are made successful." How far he succeeded in his purpose—whether he left any deep impression upon his pupils' minds, no record remains. But to the place itself and to the people he took kindly, and soon became prominent in the little society to which he belonged. He united himself with the Congregational church in Spencer Street, under the pastorate of the Rev. A. Pope; but as several of the pupils were Baptists, and attended Dr. Winslow's ministry at Warwick Street, he often went with them; he thus formed ties in both congregations, and became well known among the Nonconformist families of the place. In a very short time he again threw himself into religious work. He often took part in the prayer meetings at Spencer Street, and "created a deep impression by his spirit and freshness of expression." He also preached a great deal in the villages—at Ashorne, Bishop's Itchington, Southam, and elsewhere, and made quite a reputation not only for eloquence, but by the force and fervour of his conviction. The little chapels soon became crowded to hear him. He enjoyed the services intensely, and the discovery that he could touch the hearts and consciences of his hearers made him more certain than ever of his true vocation. He also became greatly interested in temperance work; and on more than one occasion publicly advocated the duty of total abstinence. In addition to this he became a member of a literary and debating society; he spoke frequently, and, having this outlet for thought and feeling, he forsook the pen for the platform.

Motives of another kind also led him to renounce his literary aspirations. Soon after he settled at Leamington, he made a more ambitious attempt at authorship, and the ill success of his venture was a severe mortification. Early in the year 1846, he brought out a little volume entitled *The Talents;* the publishers were Messrs. Aylott and Jones of Paternoster Row, who must have been in the way of undertaking work on commission. It will be

Aged 16.

remembered that they also published the Brontes' verses—*Poems by Ellis, Currer, and Acton Bell*—almost at the same time. Some references to *The Talents* have appeared in the newspapers since his death, but the accounts of its character and contents have not been very accurate. It was a little book of 140 pages; not a collection of addresses and sermons—as some writers have stated—but a treatise, touching many subjects indeed, yet directed solely to one specific end. It deals, in fact, with man's responsibility to God for the development and use of the powers entrusted to him, whether moral, spiritual, or intellectual. The principle which it asserts and illustrates is that "where means for the accomplishment of any good object are possessed, failure in securing that object involves guilt." It is evident that the germ of the book may be found in Channing's essay on "Self-Culture," read and reviewed ten or twelve months before. The standpoint is different; the method is different; the motive to which he appeals is not the same. Channing regarded self-culture as a duty which man owes to himself—as a duty which man would be equally bound to fulfil if there were no God, or if he had no knowledge of Him. In *The Talents* the whole stress is laid upon the religious obligation. To squander the faculties with which we have been gifted is to "rob God"; to let them rust unused, to neglect their due development, is not merely an outrage upon human nature but a violation of Divine law. But in spite of all difference and divergence, as to the impulse and origin of the book there can be no doubt. Channing's influence is apparent, even when his principles are but indirectly assailed; and in several instances his opinions and arguments are specifically mentioned.

Detailed analysis of the book would be superfluous; it will be sufficient to indicate in outline its method and scope. After asserting the general responsibility of man to God for the proper use of his endowments, it proceeds to deal with the intellectual and spiritual powers which he possesses: the function of the mind is to obtain knowledge of Truth; our spiritual faculties have as their end

assimilation to the Divine nature. Then "influence" is discussed at length—the influence of friends, of books, of society; the power which human beings exert upon one another, in the family, the state, the church; the influence which affects others unconsciously, and that which works by deliberate and systematic activity—a discussion which involves the relation of the Christian to the world, the part he should take in politics, in ameliorating the social system, and his personal responsibility for the salvation of the human race. In the last section the use of "Time" is considered, with the ways in which it is wasted or misapplied, through indolence, frivolity, caprice, or for want of steady purpose and fixed principle. A concluding chapter sums up the argument, and enforces the duty of whole-hearted devotion to the God who made us.

The book, of course, is full of faults, but it is a remarkable production for a boy just turned sixteen, and parts of it must have been written even before that age. The style is too florid; the words are often too strong for the thought. The temper is intolerant—even if it is the intolerance of youth; condemnation is too sweeping, too indiscriminate; and the opinions expressed are in many cases as crude as they are dogmatic. In short, judged both by literary and moral standards, the pitch is too high. But notwithstanding immaturity and inexperience, even here may be traced some of the qualities which ripened in after years. In the first place, the book shows a certain intellectual tenacity. To some men — more especially in their youth—a truth is but a stepping-stone, on which they alight but do not linger; they touch it only in passing, and at once press on to whatever lies beyond. With Dale it was not so. Throughout his life a truth, when apprehended, mastered him, dominated him, took possession of his thought and imagination. One might almost say that he lived under the benignant sway of a succession of great truths, following one another like the constellations of the heavens. Even here the tendency is apparent. The idea which is the pith and core of his article on Channing's essay has been working in his mind;

it is followed out in its bearings; it receives wide and ample application. In fact, it would hardly be too much to say that human nature, as a whole, is contemplated in the light of this thought; the principle is applied, not as an isolated truth, but in such a way as to establish unity in life and duty. Here also, as in later works, the thought advances not in line but in column; there is a certain massiveness in the movement, which even tawdry rhetoric cannot wholly conceal. In the style itself—with all its blemishes—there is the promise of excellence. In many ways it presents a palpable contrast to the productions of ordinary lads of the same age. The relation between the sentences is distinct; they are not thrown together at random. The author has conceived in his own mind the effect which he wishes to produce; and he makes his way, not indeed without slipping and stumbling, towards his end. The sense of rhythm also is distinct; the emphasis is the same in writing and in speech; he had already begun to write "with the ring in his ears." One coincidence has a special interest. In a fiery denunciation of priestcraft, and all the evils which were its outcome, he quotes Macaulay's famous panegyric of the Puritans.[1] The same passage is quoted again in the discourses on the Epistle of James—a book left unfinished at his death—with a characteristic qualification due to the mellowing forces of age and to the discipline of suffering and sorrow:[2] it is a link between his first book and his last.

The Talents must have found some sale—probably among friends and the members of the Tabernacle Church; for when the account was made up, the balance due to the publishers was only a penny over seven guineas. But the reviews were hostile; private remonstrances, one may believe, were even more severe. The violence of the writer must have been distasteful to quiet, easy-going people. A touch of republicanism, and a hardly veiled antipathy to the State Church and an hereditary legislature dismayed the timid. His vehement indictment of Christian

[1] *The Talents*, pp. 83, 84.
[2] *The Epistle of James and other Discourses*, pp. 19, 20.

churches for their frigid formalism could not fail to provoke the resentment of conventional orthodoxy; and little or no allowance was made for the generous unwisdom of youth. Dr. Campbell, in particular, expressed his indignation without reserve; and no doubt congratulated himself on his discretion in refusing to send such a firebrand into the ministry. As for the luckless author, he soon came to regret that he had ever ventured into print, and several years passed before he repeated the experiment.

In spite of these engrossing interests life at Leamington began to open on another side. There were other things in it, he found, besides books, and platforms, and pulpits, —things of no slight importance too for success in the effective work of the ministry. Leamington was a small town; the lines of social cleavage were clearly defined, and for that very reason those who were associated in church fellowship were drawn all the more closely together. He soon made friends, both among the Independents at Spencer Street and the Baptists at Warwick Street; and in some cases the friendship became intimate. His life grew less solitary; "the kindly human voice" began to make itself heard. He soon found himself at home in many houses, and made companions among young people of his own age. In many ways—in spite of uncongenial duties and unsatisfied aspirations—it was a happy time; and in the years that followed he often recalled "the sermons and the suppers in the house on the Lower Parade," and the evenings spent with his friend George Ebbs and his two sisters, who often took the visitor to task for the whims and extravagances of youth. And not far away at Wasperton—screened by a genuine Warwickshire orchard, isled in an undulating sea of pasture, and with outlying fields that fringe the still, deep pools of Avon—was a farmhouse in which he was always welcome; a true abode of peace, rich in the affections and virtues that are the beauty and the strength and the security of life; for Mrs. Garner had the intelligence, the sympathy, the grace of manner and spirit, which exert a more universal and a more enduring charm than brilliancy or beauty. And

there were others—many others, whose names it is needless to recall—that did their part in planing down the rough excrescences of character, steadily and imperceptibly as the boulders are shaped and smoothed in the bed of a mountain stream. It was in the main the brightest and happiest period of his youth; and while yielding to the delights of social intercourse, he was not swept off his feet by these new forces. He lost none of his earnestness. "He was then,"—says Miss Cash,—"though so young, an influence that all who came in contact with him felt; we looked up to him as a kind of seer; many of us owe to him our strong Nonconformist principles; but over and above all, I remember his great devoutness, and how the early prayer meeting on Sunday morning used to be crowded when it was known that he would be there." Another friend—Mr. H. A. Glass—helps to complete the impression, and gives a vivid picture of him as he appeared in a less serious mood.

I have never forgotten the go and the fun and the brilliance with which he conducted the old domestic fireside game of the "Family Coach" at a large party. Knowing nearly every one and their idiosyncrasies, he would prepare a sketch of the disasters that befell the coach and its passengers which resulted in unbounded merriment, as one after another had to rise and turn round at the succession of keen humorous personal hits, as delightful to the recipients of the allusions as to the laughing assembly. But he had not the personal appearance of fun. Tall, slim, long black hair, with a moustache and beard already darkening on his face—such was he to the eye before he was out of his teens.

A few extracts from his letters will show what other interests relieved the monotony of school work.

To Mr. Hugh Maltby

Royal Leamington Spa,
May 8, 1846.

I have been reading lately, or rather devouring, the miscellaneous works of Robert Hall. What a splendid fellow! I can't make him out. His writings have a charm, a power, a

spirit decidedly peculiar. As a thinker he was the most profound, as a logician the most correct, as a writer the most chaste, elegant, energetic, that I have yet become acquainted with. Binney is very fine, magnificent at times, but there is no dependence to be placed upon him. Hall was always eloquent. I am looking with exceeding interest to Bubier of Brixton Hill. If he does not become the first preacher of his day I shall be disappointed. I know of no man except Binney whose sermons at all approach to his in the peculiar talent Bubier manifests.

I really do envy your proximity to Exeter Hall. I have often calculated on attending the May meetings but, as you know, have hitherto been disappointed. Well, I suppose our hopes are fulfilled sometimes in the course of one's life as well as disappointed, so that I may yet hope to be present between this and death.

ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA,
May 1846.

You are still an advocate of the "Alliance."[1] I wish I were; and to tell the truth, about a week since, my mind was half persuaded—nay more than half, I'm sure—that it is a good thing, but some of your Wesleyan brethren completely knocked it out of me. I was present at one of their tea meetings on Monday evening, and in the course of the proceedings a local preacher gave an account of the Sunday Schools in the Circuit, which on the whole are prosperous. He said, however, "we labour under considerable disadvantage at Cubbington. The clergyman refuses to permit the children to enjoy the advantage of day school instruction, except they likewise go to the Church Sunday School. I trust the time will come when the Wesleyans will likewise have a school with an efficient master and mistress in that village." Now, as near as possible, I have given you the words of the speaker. Is there anything un-Christian, unlovely here?

When he had finished, the chairman rose and began: "I must be permitted to say one word. I do not think we have any right to make reference to the conduct of clergymen at such a meeting as this." The previous speaker rose with just indignation, and said: "I feel called upon to defend myself. I do not think it right that we should leave our labour to attack others, but when Wesleyan Methodists are interfered with in their work by others, I trust they will ever defend that part of the vineyard which the Lord hath committed to their hands." The meeting gave a burst of applause in true Wesleyan style, in which I joined most

[1] The Evangelical Alliance.

heartily and enthusiastically. Several speakers followed, and the two or three that made reference to the subject were of one mind with the chairman. I have also read again a very powerful article in the *Eclectic* against the Alliance. All here are in favour of it, and although I fear it will retard some of the most important movements among us, I think that having stood for a month or two, all will come to the ground.

ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA,
4th August 1846.

What am I doing? You would like me to answer the question, I dare say. Well, in the first place, I am trying to get up a "Leamington Royal Literary and Scientific Institution."[1] I have written a letter to the editor of our local paper on the subject, and intend to bring the matter before the book society to which I belong at its meeting to-morrow evening. Mr. Müller has been trying to get one up, but he has endeavoured to do it by means of great men's influence. Not having been able to do this to the extent he wished, he has not put his thoughts into practice. It is my intention to appeal to "the people" if I can secure the columns of the *Courier*. This, indeed, is the most powerful means which I can employ. I have, of course, but a small influence in either my own or the Baptist church, from the recency of the time at which I came to the town. Mr. Pope is about leaving, so that I cannot look much to him. Mr. Winslow is so much engaged that I cannot hope to make him more than an occasional auxiliary. And with regard to the other influential men in the town, I am not on terms of sufficient intimacy to justify confident application to them. But while my personal influence may be little, I flatter myself that my letters in the *Courier* would be at least as powerful as the "leaders," which are of a very poor character generally. If then I can write in such a fashion that my letters will not suffer by comparison with the general matter of the paper, there is some hope of success. All the difficulty is with regard to the courtesy of the editor. However, I must hope. It would be a pleasant thing to originate a good Institution of this kind in such a town as "the Spa." None can estimate the amount of good it would most probably effect.

Aged 17. So passed his first twelve months at Leamington. He had settled down in the place, and had taken root there, when a sudden change occurred which seriously affected his prospects. At the end of 1846, or early in the new

[1] The plan was successful, and the Institution lasted for some years.

year, Mr. Müller, who for some time had been involved in financial difficulties, failed, and left Leamington. If any arrangement was made with the creditors, the "good-will" of the school, it would seem, was not reckoned among the assets; for the young assistant—who certainly had no means to purchase it—at once took charge, and carried on the classes for a few months. But it did not need any long experience to convince him that success was out of the question. Everything was against him: his youth in itself would be regarded as a disqualification by most parents; the misfortunes of his predecessor could not fail to weaken his position; clerical influence, too, was exerted to draw away some possible pupils. His own inclinations, also, were impelling him in another direction. Mr. Pope, his pastor at Spencer Street, encouraged him to enter the ministry; and at his suggestion Dale wrote to the Rev. T. R. Barker, the resident tutor of Spring Hill College, Birmingham, applying for admission. At first it seemed as if the plan would come to nothing. Money difficulties stood in the way. The college had no funds to help a student to defray his personal expenses; the candidate in this case had no money of his own, and could not look to his family for any substantial assistance. Matters were at a deadlock, and must have remained there, but for the intervention of Mrs. Cash and other friends at Leamington, who joined together to guarantee the amount that was needed—about £20 a year—until such time as he could provide for himself by fees for occasional help in the pulpit. And it is shown by more than one testimony that Dale regarded her as the person who, humanly speaking, had opened for him the way into the ministry, and had put it in his power to qualify himself for his life work. They were already on terms of intimacy before he left Leamington. He was a frequent visitor at her house; he was the friend of her children. During his college course he often spent a part of his vacation as her guest, and his letters show that he was accustomed to turn to her for sympathy and advice. Her influence must have been of the greatest value

during the period of growth and development. Her intellectual force was sufficient to ensure respect; and in experience, both moral and spiritual, a young man could have had no surer guide. She did not hesitate to speak her mind freely, or to reprove where reproof seemed called for; but she was patient, and in her personal relations neither exacting nor ready to take offence. How much the churches owe to women of her type will never be fully known: they make men—and they help to make movements.

Set free from this difficulty, Dale renewed his application for admission to the college; and after examination was accepted as a student on probation for the autumn session of 1847. It was not without trepidation that he made his appearance before the Board of Education. His classical knowledge, he knew, was weak, and he was afraid that he might not succeed in reaching the required standard. However, he acquitted himself successfully in the classical papers, and also satisfied the Committee in the cross-examination that followed:[1] he describes his experiences to Mr. Offord in a letter written a few days later.

To Mr. Offord

23rd September 1847.

Their cross-examination related to all sorts of odd things, such as smoking and election, courtship and justification by faith, obedience to college rules and sanctification, promises of early rising and the perseverance of the saints. After the close of this ordeal, John Angell James, with the full round tone and wave-like diction which you can doubtless fancy, informed me that I had been successful—that I had been "received cordially and unanimously"; he wished, he said, "to lay special stress on the adverb cordially." I am now therefore on my three months' probation, and have every prospect of a pleasant six years' sojourn in the walls of Spring Hill. You will, perhaps, be curious to know something of my position and circumstances.

Upon coming to the college I was, as all juniors are, put into one room, which was to serve as my study and bedroom;

[1] The "plan" of his "trial" sermon is given in the appendix at the close of this chapter.

the said room being without carpet, without table, having in it a high deal desk and stool to match, a reed-bottomed chair, a deal chest of drawers and a small press bedstead. By a singular good chance, however, I was enabled to exchange with one of my seniors, and am now in possession of two rooms; the bedroom being nicely furnished, and the study under the process of improvement. The rooms which I now occupy have been generally reserved for a senior student, who has occupied them as a privilege during the last year or two of his college term.

We are rung up at six o'clock in the morning all the year round, and generally have one class to attend before breakfast two or three times a week. The interval between breakfast and dinner at 2.30 is occupied by sundry lectures and classes; between 2.30 and 5.30 by various classes and private study. After tea, till prayers at nine, of course we have to work privately, and though the rule is a dead letter we are required to extinguish fire and candle at 10.30.

One incident he does not mention. When he appeared before the Board, Mr. James, who presided, asked him as his first question whether he could define the difference between justification and sanctification. At the time he was very indignant: such a question seemed to him positively childish. "I was ready"—he said to a friend, when he had grown older and could laugh at his want of sense—"to be asked anything concerning free-will and predestination, or some deep thing, and thought it positively insulting to my understanding." But whatever he felt, he had wisdom enough to keep his anger to himself.

APPENDIX

PLAN OF A SERMON SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE OF SPRING HILL COLLEGE

The cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified to me and I to the world.—GALATIANS vi. 14.

Subject: Crucifixion to the World—what is it, and how effected?

Consider—

I. What it is to be crucified to the world—as illustrated by the life of Paul the Apostle and the life of Paul the Persecutor.

II. How the Cross effects this:

(*a*) By calling up a system of affections towards Christ which necessarily weaken the influence of old worldward affections—just as any ruling passion weakens all other affections.

(*b*) By connecting the soul by the strongest possible ties with Him whose kingdom is not of this world.

(*c*) More directly, by creating positive hostility to principles and habits which made Christ's sufferings necessary.

(*d*) By laying the soul under obligations of the most weighty and affecting kind to pursue a course in direct hostility to whatever belongs to "the world."

(*e*) By laying a foundation for the direct work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart.

Practical Conclusions.[1]

1. No wonder that the Apostle "gloried in the cross of Christ."
2. The highest spiritual attainments are arrived at by contact with and obedience to the grand elementary facts of the gospel: Christ—not philosophising about Christ—is the "Bread of life."
3. If crucifixion to the world is the natural and intended result of a true relation to Christ crucified, there should be solemn questioning on the part of some "whether they be in the faith."

[1] In the second of the "Practical Conclusions" we may recognise in germ one of the most characteristic thoughts of his preaching in later life.

CHAPTER III

COLLEGE DAYS

Spring Hill College and its staff: Mr. Barker, Mr. Watts, Mr. Henry Rogers —Fellow-students—Political life of Birmingham—Uphill work—Christmas at College—The excitements of '48—Binney and young men—George Dawson, his charm and influence—Sense of helplessness—Academic honours—Mr. James in the pulpit—Edward Glanville—Dr. Paton's reminiscences—Summer vacation—Preaches at Carr's Lane—Mr. James, growing intimacy and affection—Enters the Theological Class—Helps to found a Theological Society—Spiritual depression—A critical decision—Bright, Cobden, Miall—The religious needs of London—Doubt and its nature—"Gospel Sermons"; self-defence—Invited to a pastorate at Hanley.

IN the autumn of 1847, when Dale entered Spring Hill, the college had been in existence for nine years. The deed of foundation goes back to an earlier date, but a considerable period intervened before the plans of the founders—Mr. George Storer Mansfield and his two sisters—could be carried out. Even after that interval the scheme was far from complete, and additional funds were needed to establish the college on the scale that had been contemplated. The original buildings on the Dudley Road were still in occupation; for although the site on Moseley Common—to which the college was removed in the year 1856—had already been purchased, the money required for the cost of the new buildings had yet to be raised. Meanwhile the staff and the students had to be content with temporary accommodation. The position and the arrangements of the place were by no means satisfactory. The college was divided by the road into two distinct portions. On one side stood the resident

Aged 17¾.

tutor's house, the lecture-rooms, the dining-hall, and six sets of students' rooms; on the other side, six cottages were occupied by twenty-four students. The natural result was that the men found themselves divided into two sets: those on the "house-side," as it was called, had comparatively little intercourse with their fellow-students over the way; two communities, one smaller and the other larger, lived side by side. Nor was this the only drawback. Birmingham had already begun to expand: long lines of streets were pushing out from the centre in all directions, and the spaces between were steadily filling up. The college had not yet been submerged by the advancing tide, but its respite was short; and though a few fields still lay round about it, the grass and the trees were begrimed with the smoke and dust of the town. Nothing indeed could have been less attractive in itself than a building so situated, and already under the shadow of impending removal; and it was but natural that the feeling of the students should be personal rather than corporate, and that they should think very much more of the men who taught them than of the institution to which they belonged. The influence of the college, therefore, depended largely, if not solely, on the character and the ability of its professors. During the years with which we are concerned it was singularly fortunate in the three men who filled its chairs.

Two of them—Mr. Barker and Mr. Watts—though well qualified for their work, were not in any sense men of pre-eminent ability. Mr. Barker—the resident tutor, on whom the burden of administration mainly rested—was an excellent classical scholar, and for Hebrew and Syriac he had a genuine passion. His character was as high as his attainments. But a certain shyness and restraint made it difficult for the students, until they had learned to know him, adequately to appreciate the tenderness and simplicity of his nature. He was scrupulously fair, inflexibly just; but he always said less than he felt, and promised less than he performed. Outwardly, he was formal, punctilious, almost frigid; but in time, when his students saw through

the manner and found the man, they loved and trusted him with their whole heart.

Mr. Watts, the theological tutor, was of an altogether different type. His accomplishments were varied. He cared for art, was an excellent German scholar, and a "serious student of Dante." His theological training had been wider than was then common; for after leaving Homerton he had studied under Tholuck at the University of Halle. In some respects he was an excellent teacher. If he had no genius for dogma, in exegesis he was thoroughly at home, although he was apt to heap up authorities until the passage which he was interpreting was buried beneath the mass of material. But he had one supreme merit as a teacher—an absolute and uncompromising intellectual integrity.

He made it a matter of conscience to discover and to maintain the real thought of the writer. No doctrinal considerations could ever tempt him to tamper with the text. He had formed that habit of "detachment" which characterises the best German exegetical scholars; it was his business to learn what his author meant, not to put a meaning upon him in the interest of any theological doctrine. The doctrine might be infinitely sacred and dear to his own heart; if so, it was too sacred and too dear to require or to suffer false service; in any case, it was his duty to find his author's meaning.[1]

In other branches of his work he was less efficient; for the college, like all such colleges, was undermanned, and he had too many subjects to deal with; some he left untouched; others he attempted, but without any mastery or grip. Moreover, it was always possible to turn him aside from the course of his lecture into conversation. He was eager to answer questions or to remove difficulties, and so absorbed in his subject that it never seemed to occur to him that questions might not be altogether ingenuous, and that problems were propounded to conceal ignorance rather than to increase knowledge.

Henry Rogers, the other tutor, stood on a different

[1] R. W. Dale, *Mansfield College, Oxford: its Origin and Opening.* London: James Clarke and Co., 1890, p. 14.

level; and with Dale his influence was paramount. He was already known as a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review* in its most brilliant days. His articles were read with delight by such critics as Macaulay, Stephen, and Whately. On two occasions he was invited, and indeed urged, to undertake the editorship of the great Whig review. Some of his most effective work was produced while he was at Spring Hill, and from young men his reputation in the outside world could not fail to win exceptional respect. Even had his character been less noble, his influence would have been great; but the simplicity of his nature, the freshness of his mind, and his broad human sympathy enlarged and extended his power. The subjects allotted to him—with the exception of mathematics, which at Spring Hill were studied only in the more elementary branches—were precisely those that showed him at his best. Logic, literature, history—which were assigned to the first two years of the college course—admitted, and indeed provoked, discussion; and it was in this informal method of instruction that he was most effective. In addition to the regular work of the class, it was his custom for many years to invite the senior students to meet him in his private room on two afternoons in the week, to read with him a succession of philosophical authors. The class was small—as a rule not more than six or seven in number. Attendance was not compulsory; but those who attended at all, attended regularly: men went because they wished, not because they were compelled to go. The *Ethics* of Aristotle; the *Apologia*, the *Theaetetus*, and the *Republic* of Plato; Descartes' *Method;* Bacon's *Novum Organum;* and in some years Pascal, and Leibnitz, and Spinoza, were the books that were thus studied. These lectures are described in Dale's memoir of his friend and master.

Mr. Rogers's delight in vigorous discussion, his quick wit, graceful fancy, and alert memory, made these very informal classes as agreeable as they were profitable. He allowed, and even encouraged, considerable discursiveness. When reading Plato, the conversation often drifted suddenly from the ancient

antagonists of Socrates to the modern antagonists of the Christian faith; whatever difficulties any of the men felt about miracles, or about the scientific objections to the early parts of the Old Testament, were frankly argued, and were the subjects of keen debate. When his *Eclipse of Faith* appeared, those of his students who had been at his afternoon readings for the previous two years, discovered that the imaginary conversations in that book bore distinct traces of the very real and ardent debates in which they had tried their strength against their tutor.

His knowledge of literature and his delicate appreciation of beauty of literary form added a great charm to his lectures. He was always very resolute in making sure that his men had done the work he had given out—woe to the idler who was not ready with his tale of bricks! but except in his mathematical classes it was never very difficult to turn him aside from the direct track of his teaching to a dissertation on the style of Pascal or Plato, of Locke or South, of Addison, Swift, or Goldsmith, of Burke or Paley; a question innocently interjected which looked in the direction of any of these great writers was fatal; he rose to it as a hungry trout, in the dusk of evening, rises to a favourite fly.[1]

Close contact with an intellect of such originality and force is one of the most enduring benefits that the student can enjoy. To live with a man who lives with the immortals, who has advanced from youth to manhood in such converse with their spirits that intimacy and affection deepening year by year have turned the dead volumes into living friends; to catch from him the same ardour of admiration and passion of delight is a rare felicity, a life-long blessing. It would not be difficult, perhaps, to trace back some of Dale's convictions to the personal influence under which his college days were spent; though to speak with assurance about the growth of opinion is always perilous. Even when, like Newman, a man unlocks his own heart, and attempts to read its history, he is prone to mislead himself; and for others the problem is even more intricate. But about the influence of Mr. Rogers in shaping his pupils' literary sympathies there can be little doubt. In the matter of style he had much to unlearn. "Your style, Mr. Dale, is too Asiatic," said Mr. Watts, in

[1] "Memoir of H. Rogers," pp. xxiv, xxv, in *The Superhuman Origin of the Bible*, new edition, 1893.

criticising one of his early sermons. Mr. Rogers taught him what models he should study; and the author of *The Eclipse of Faith* and *Greyson's Letters* was a model himself. From him Dale caught that delight in literary excellence which he carried with him through life—the strenuous resolve to aim at perfection exhibited in his own work, the dignity and simplicity of his own style, to attain which he spared himself no pains. It was through Mr. Rogers also that he first came to admire the genius of Burke; the greatness of Butler—whom Mr. Rogers enthroned above all—he had already discovered for himself. This admiration for Burke, which began at college, lasted on into his latest years. He was rarely a good sleeper; at night he often lay awake for hours together, and on the shelves above the bed, or upon the chair at its side, stood a pile of books—poets, historians—Wordsworth, Arnold, Froude; some of the great French masters of style—Pascal or Sainte-Beuve; but invariably, year after year, a volume or two of Burke in the familiar red covers might be found there. The others came and went; theirs was a transitory reign; but Burke remained, a familiar friend, whom no vicissitude of time or circumstance could dispossess.

In most cases what a man learns in the lecture-room is but a part—and the smaller part—of his college education. His teachers, in the truest and widest sense, are the men of his own age, whose thought and life he shares. To a certain extent this would hold good at Spring Hill, though the society there was too limited to give such influences their full force. During the years 1847-52, the number of students in residence never rose above twenty-one, and at one period fell as low as fifteen. Dr. Eustace Conder, till then the most distinguished alumnus of the foundation, had already completed his course; but among Dale's contemporaries were several men who subsequently rose to eminence in the Congregational ministry—Dr. Paton of Nottingham; the Rev. R. A. Redford; the Rev. Thomas Green, and others: the Rev. P. C. Barker—now Vicar of Priddy—a son of the resident tutor, was admitted with

him on the same day. His closest friend, however, was the Rev. Edward Glanville, who died after a few years' service in the ministry. The arrangement of the college buildings, as already described, divided the men into two sets, and Dale lived with four or five others on the "house-side" of the college. With none of these except Glanville had he much intercourse; and after his second year, when his intimacy with Glanville had become settled, he rarely crossed the road. And so it happened that he himself did not exert the influence at college which his character and ability might naturally have commanded, and that he in his turn was influenced by his companions to a comparatively slight extent. Other causes helped to increase the isolation. He was always subject to fits of depression; and during his college days, the pressure of work and the moral strain under which he lived confirmed this habit of mind. More than once he speaks of "the strange, morbid gloominess" with which he had to contend. He fought against it with dogged pertinacity, but when the cloud descended, he had to fight alone and in the dark: friends could do little to help him, though he was always grateful for such aid as they could give. At the beginning of his course, moreover, he seems to have affected an outward coldness and reserve in the general society of the place which got him the name of "the Jesuit" among those who did not understand his real character and disposition. But if there was little intimacy between himself and others, there was no lack of respect, and certainly no hostility. Mr. Shalders, a fellow-student, says he was "a favourite, generally speaking, of all. He had an ear for every one of them; never snubbed the slowest, nor the fastest, but had a kind tongue." Mr. Barker's testimony is to the same effect: "Not a single fellow-student during those six years bore him malice or had any grudge against him."

It must not be forgotten that the life of the students at Spring Hill in those days was by no means confined to the college and its interests. They were in the town and of the town: in its excitements and activities they

had their part. And as a preparation for becoming leaders of men, such contact with the life of a great community brought some compensation for the lack of seclusion, beauty, and repose. Those were stirring years in Birmingham. The tumultuous excitement that had centred there during the struggle for the Reform Bill of 1832 had abated; but political ardour was still intense, and the energy that had brought the town to the front in that great constitutional struggle still animated its citizens. The Town Hall—which every true son of Birmingham regards as one, if not the noblest, of its schools—stood at no great distance from the college. As yet its walls had not become indissolubly associated with the eloquence of John Bright, matching in simplicity and strength its own Doric columns; but there were local orators of no mean ability; and from time to time came visitors of wide repute—Emerson, Kossuth, Gavazzi, J. B. Gough and Elihu Burritt, Feargus O'Connor, and Henry Vincent. Great town's-meetings, too, were often held, at which the questions then agitating the nation were discussed by leaders of both parties. Chartism—the Revolution of 1848, with all the fears and hopes to which it gave birth—the Tractarian Movement in all its phases—Papal aggression—and many other matters, serious enough then, but long since forgotten, were stirring men's minds during those eventful years. And the Spring Hill students, even had they wished it, could hardly have held aloof from the current of vigorous and turbulent life by which they were encompassed.

For most young men entrance at college marks a transition from a lesser to a larger freedom; but with Dale it was not so. For some time previously he had been very much his own master. School duties had left him with a considerable amount of leisure, and at liberty to preach or to speak whenever opportunity offered. Now, during the first two years of his course, vacations excepted, speech in public was absolutely forbidden: out of the session he might spend his energies as he chose, but during term-time he was bound to obey the rule of silence.

At Leamington, moreover, he had found himself a person of consideration in the little circle of friends in which he moved. The younger people regarded him as a coming prophet; those who were older and cooler, already treated him with unusual deference. But within the college walls he had to make a new start—to begin the world again in a very real sense, and to work his way upwards from below.

Nor was this all. He had serious difficulties to contend with—foes that were not merely "of his own household," but actually within himself, whose presence and power he now realised for the first time. A lad who, like Dale, leaves school at thirteen has only just begun to learn. He has to become his own teacher, and he is practically self-educated. But no effort, no industry, can make up for the lack of discipline and method. Dale felt the loss, and never ceased to regret it. Indeed, his anxiety in later years to make the endowed Grammar Schools of the country more accessible and more efficient was largely due to his sense of the lasting injury which he himself had sustained. Hitherto, intellectually, he had been leading a nomadic life, revelling in its freshness and freedom. He had read what he liked, and how he liked. When the mood came upon him, he was at liberty to push onwards with the guide of the hour through unexplored regions of thought, till the impulse that spurred him lost its force; but now he had to put his mind in harness, to constrain it to tedious drudgery: he had to master subtleties of syntax and details of accidence—to plod along "the common road, the Appian way of Knowledge," as Sir Thomas Browne calls it. In his case such discipline was indispensable. When he entered college, he had read widely indeed but without much method. He had little Latin and less Greek; his mathematical attainments were limited also. It was necessary to turn schoolboy again—to work under unwonted restraints, with fixed hours and appointed tasks, subject to the bondage of system and of law. The change was irksome and irritating; and he chafed at the collar. During the

first few months some anxiety was felt as to his ability to bear a test that must have taxed all the resources of his self-control. But he passed through the trial victoriously, though not without a struggle. There can be no doubt that it was personal experience that led him in after years to dwell with such persistence and vigour upon the supreme importance of securing "a despotic control over all the intellectual faculties." Whether addressing theological students at Yale, or schoolboys at Mill Hill, he gives the same advice—to pay special attention to those subjects which they find most repulsive. With half-humorous, half-serious exaggeration, he went so far as to suggest that if a teacher found among his pupils one who took an equal delight in all the ordinary subjects of instruction, it would be his duty to discover for that pupil's special benefit a subject that he would feel offensive or intolerable; for the object of all teaching, in the school and at the university, is to enable a man to read, not what he likes, but what he dislikes, and to develop all the intellectual energies in harmonious proportion. That he set himself to act upon the advice which he gave to others is a fact not open to question.[1]

The first year of college life was uneventful. The young student was getting his foothold upon strange ground. When Christmas came, as "the vacation and his purse were both short," he determined to spend the interval at Spring Hill, in "the dingy, draughty, dreary college." The presence of two or three fellow-students relieved the solitude; and a few weeks of "legal laziness," when grammar and lexicon might be laid aside with an easy conscience, were by no means unwelcome. The vacation, he tells a friend, "passed pleasantly on the whole"; but at the best it cannot have been the most cheerful of seasons. Memories of other days revived in all their strength; and in the absence of intimate and familiar companions he set himself to recall in imagination the friends from whom he was separated. So to

[1] *Lectures on Preaching*, p. 7. *Address at Mill Hill*, pp. 3, 4.

dissolve the barriers of space and time, and in solitary hours to gather round him those whom he loved from distant lands, and from the grave itself, became his habit in later life; this is the earliest instance recorded of it.

The routine of the following term was broken by the troubles in France. Early in the year, Louis Philippe was driven from the Tuileries, and the French Republic proclaimed. In England the revolution was watched with intense excitement, and at Birmingham, as elsewhere, a great meeting was held by the Radical party to express sympathy with the movement on the Continent. Arthur O'Neil and other Chartists were among the speakers; an address of congratulation was passed with unbounded enthusiasm, and a petition was endorsed in support of "the People's Charter." This was Dale's first experience of a great political assembly, and his delight, as may be imagined, was keen. Another incident of the same period is described in one of his letters. Thomas Binney—who, perhaps, helped more than any other man to modify the traditional method and style of preaching among Nonconformists—at the meeting of the Congregational Union in May delivered an address, or "oration," as it was then called, upon the mission of Congregationalists to their times. It was a new conception then, and the speaker was worthy of his theme. The subjects which he discussed, and the frank, bold spirit in which he dealt with them, were exactly such as would appeal to the sympathy of young men looking forward with high hopes and ideals to the ministry as their future calling. When the newspaper containing the report of the address arrived, some half dozen of the students took it out into the field close by, and sat through the summer afternoon beneath the trees listening to it as it was read aloud. "At the close," Dale says, "up sprang one of the audience, and cried with enthusiasm, Three cheers for Binney and the young men! I haven't given such hearty cheers," he adds, "I know not how long."

The admiration here expressed for Binney indicates

that Dale was already beginning to modify his theological opinions; for Binney was not only a great personality; he represented a movement—a departure from the limits of conventional orthodoxy; not a revolt against Evangelical doctrine so much as a repudiation of the formulas and phrases in which Evangelical doctrines were generally stated. This impression is confirmed by the character of the preaching by which at that time Dale was most strongly attracted. For many men who were then at Spring Hill, the Rev. R. A. Vaughan, the minister of Steelhouse Lane, had an irresistible charm. Those who have read his *Hours with the Mystics*—in which the very soul of the man is mirrored—can imagine with what grace and tenderness and solemn urgency he delivered his message to his people. But Dale was not one of those who came under the spell: he never failed, either then or afterwards, to admire Mr. Vaughan's pre-eminent gifts, and the spiritual power, that even in a man of mature experience would have been remarkable; but from some cause or other, Mr. Vaughan's preaching never "found him." The sermons at Carr's Lane were still less to his liking: by them he was actually repelled. Mr. James, as he soon discovered, was not a man of exact thought. His theological system was neither precise nor profound. He was not original; and originality—to quote Dale's own words—"was the pearl of great price: we were willing to sell all that we had to buy it."[1] Besides this, at Carr's Lane, both in the life of the church and in the tone and character of the service, there was much that would be distasteful to the impetuous temper of youth. Some amount of attendance there was exacted by college custom, if not by rule; but Dale, so far as he was free to follow his own inclination, went elsewhere. George Dawson was the preacher of his choice. During his first two years at Spring Hill, he heard Dawson nearly every Sunday evening, and occasionally on Sunday morning also. Even after he began to preach as a student, in the autumn of 1849, he still heard him occasionally, and he

[1] *Lectures on Preaching*, p. 296.

continued to attend his ministry, with more or less regularity, until he left college in June 1853.[1]

George Dawson was then just beginning his remarkable career. He had already broken with the Baptists, and was carrying on his ministry in the Church of the Saviour, built for him by his supporters. There he gathered round him men of all types—some who were dissatisfied with dogma, though they clung to truth; others, who, finding their spiritual energy impoverished by the decay of faith, sought still to keep alive religious emotion, and to retain the shadow when they had lost the substance. Dawson himself, though unconventional to the verge of audacity, was less unorthodox than most people imagined. He was no theologian, and never constructed for himself any definite system of belief. If he was inconsistent, it was only in the sense that he had no fixed standpoint, and because it was his habit to consider truths and principles from many sides. But from one position he never shifted: his hostility to the Evangelical faith, as it was then held by most churches, was not only bitter, but had in it a touch of contempt; he assailed it with every weapon at his command, and kept up the onslaught year after year. He was not a Unitarian; it would be incorrect so to describe him; but in sympathy and association he stood nearer to the Unitarians than to any other church, and it was not unnatural that he should be identified with them. It says much for the tact and the tolerance of the college authorities that a student should have been suffered to attend a ministry of this kind during a considerable portion of his course without remonstrance, if not without remark.

There is no difficulty in accounting for the fascination which Dawson's preaching exerted over the young man. It was "original" in the truest sense of the word; and originality, as we have already seen, was regarded as the supreme gift. His sermons were not merely unconventional in thought and expression; they were full of the unexpected. He was not indeed much given to specula-

[1] "George Dawson," by R. W. Dale: the *Nineteenth Century*, August 1877.

tion: the truths that he set forth were neither strange nor startling; but he led those who listened to him "by a way which they knew not," and the familiar had all the freshness and charm of a new discovery. He had read widely—in literature and history more especially; but he was not a bookish preacher, and he spoke the language not of print but of life. Whatever he learned from others, he transformed into something new by the force of his own personality.

To what extent Dale's preaching was affected by Dawson's influence it would be difficult to determine; but in one or two directions the results are conspicuous. The stress that he laid upon ethics must in a measure be attributed to this cause. It was Dawson's habit to insist on the everyday duties of life; and to state those duties in words that every one could understand; to call the commonest things by their common names; to escape as soon as possible from generalities to particulars; to take his examples and illustrations from the daily experience of those to whom he spoke. His teaching was largely ethical, but it was social also. He dwelt upon the duty and the dignity of municipal work; he insisted that a man in becoming a Christian did not cease to be a citizen, and that his Christianity, if it was real, must reveal itself in a higher and nobler ideal of citizenship. These truths were not foreign to Dale's own thought; but Dawson's preaching demonstrated how they might be applied in practice; and such an example must have told upon him with no inconsiderable force.[1]

The fascination was strong, but it was not supreme: Dale was not mastered by it. Even when he records that "Dawson preaches away better than ever," and confesses that the contemplation of such wonderful gifts almost tempts him "to shrink away from the ministry,"

[1] The evidence on which this estimate of Dawson's influence is based cannot be stated concisely. But (1) the article in the *Nineteenth Century* (August 1877, pp. 49, 50) shows how vivid the impression left by Dawson's ethical sermons—and especially by their method and manner—still remained after thirty years; and (2) almost every letter that has come down from the years 1847-49 contains some reference to Dawson's teaching.

he expresses a regret that Dawson "has not more of the old Evangelical doctrine"; for the lack of this, he feels, no genius, however fresh, however genuine, can ever compensate. As he turns his thoughts inwards, the sense of human impotence comes over him, and he entreats the friend who had already helped him so greatly to help him still more.

To Mrs. Cash

Spring Hill College [1848.]

Let me entreat of you a still further favour. The teaching of man will avail me little if I am without that wisdom which God alone can supply; in those moments in which you are nearest to God, ask Him to guide me into all truth, to dispose my heart as well as my understanding to receive and hold fast the doctrines of His most holy Word. How mighty a conflict is that in which we are engaged! How full of darkness is this little world within us! The heart is indeed the world in miniature, having a little that is from above, much that is from beneath. Blessed be God! that the Christian can look forward with certainty to the time when in his own soul Christ's kingdom shall come, and His will be done there "as it is in heaven." The heart hath its promised Millennium.

At present, however, he was a scholar, not a teacher: it was his part to listen, not to speak. Work went on in its usual course: the "steady, monotonous grind," which some of his fellow-students found almost intolerable, continued without any real break. When the end of the college year came and brought his first examination—the London University Matriculation—his place in the first class, won in spite of all obstacles, showed that he had learned the lesson of resolute and unremitting industry. This first success did not lead to any relaxation of effort. During the months that followed, it is clear that he worked with an excess of energy, and suffered for it. During part of his second year he rose, sometimes at four in the morning, and regularly before five—a strain that brought on a severe attack of nervousness. He soon recovered, however; in the B.A. examination he was placed in the first

division; and—to anticipate slightly—he also gained the prize offered for Scripture Knowledge, including Old Testament Hebrew, New Testament Greek, and Scripture History.

As will be easily understood, he had not much time for letter-writing while the pressure of work was so severe; and adventures do not come in the way of a man who is tied to his study table. Here and there, however, among such parts of his correspondence as have been preserved, it is possible to trace what he was thinking and feeling. His admiration for Mr. Rogers was steadily growing. He refers with enthusiasm to the famous article on "The Glory and Vanity of Literature," one of the most brilliant, if not the most profound, of Mr. Rogers's contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*. He was also beginning to recognise more adequately Mr. James's power as a preacher, though he still cannot help contrasting him with Binney. Writing to his old friend, Mr. Offord, he says:—

To Mr. Offord

April 1849.

I heard a noble sermon from him, a few Sabbaths ago, on the causes of the neglect of religion among young men—the third of a course which he is delivering on the last Sabbath of every month. Binney would have made such a subject an intellectual feast as well as a thoroughly practical address. James's thoughts were not specially new, but he threw round them a drapery which made them most imposing and impressive. The congregation was electrified again and again. For an hour and a quarter he poured forth a stream of argument and eloquence—always clear and majestic, sometimes swelling into a torrent. His elocution and action are certainly perfect.[1] The congregation was a magnificent one: the chapel was thoroughly crammed; aisles, stairs, and lobbies were all packed. I opened service for him, and certainly the sight from the pulpit was grand. He is to preach the Surrey Chapel Sermon this year; his last great effort I suppose.

[1] The fourth sermon of the series, on "The First Wrong Step," was even more effective. "He had an allusion to Rush (the famous murderer) which made one's very blood freeze. Though far inferior as a thinker to Binney and Morris, James is certainly the finest pulpit orator I ever heard." (To Mr. Hugh Maltby.)

It was during this year—his second year at college—that his intimacy with his fellow-student, Edward Glanville, became a dominant element in his life. The two friends had entered Spring Hill on the same day; from the first they had been drawn closely together; difference of character and temperament only strengthened the ties between them; each supplied what was lacking in the other. Glanville's character was one of rare beauty. The influences of his home had been singularly happy. From childhood he had grown up in an atmosphere of untroubled peace. "He had been kept, not by a wall of fire, but by the soft yet powerful influences of parental piety, from early sins." The temptations, and the struggles, and the doubts that come to most, to him were alien and unknown. His life was not merely of one piece; it was seamless; childhood and youth and manhood were linked each to each in a unity that was natural, harmonious, unbroken. In his character strength and tenderness met together: though gentle in spirit and in manner, he was absolutely fearless. His sympathy in sickness or in sorrow was matched by his pertinacity and resolution in the rebuke of wrong-doing.

There was another union in him of apparently opposite excellences not less remarkable. I never met with a nature more transparent: he was crystal all through; equivocation, deception, simulation, were things impossible to him. There was no mist surrounding his inward nature; his thoughts and feelings shone out through his words, and deeds, and gestures, like stars shining out on a very clear night; and yet, combined in an inexplicable manner with this frankness, there was an inviolable reserve. I question whether those who knew him most intimately, ever felt that every chamber of his soul had been thrown open to them. He permitted you to see most perfectly everything that he permitted you to see at all; no mistake was possible; none of the furniture of his spiritual being was veneered. And he gave you no false impression of what was concealed; but simply made you feel that there was something beyond what you saw, about which nothing might be said or even imagined.[1]

[1] *Hope in Death:* a Sermon preached on the Occasion of the Death of the Rev. E. S. Glanville, of Warwick, by the Rev. R. W. Dale, 1858.

As the months went by, the two friends saw more and more of one another, and to a very large extent drew apart from the rest of their fellow-students. The Rev. E. W. Shalders says—

> They almost lived in each other's rooms; discussed every question in theology, philosophy, and general literature, which their reading suggested; and shared each other's confidence in matters belonging to their inner life. There was much playfulness in their intercourse, and this was all the freer for its ground being so serious.

It must not, however, be supposed that this intimacy turned Dale into a recluse, or that it withdrew him wholly from the common life and activity of the college. It turned his affection and his confidence into one channel; it did not induce him wholly to disregard the demands of social intercourse and of corporate life. In the debating club of the college he took a prominent part.

"He entered college," says Dr. Paton,

> having already a marvellous command of language. I have known other young men who have, in early life, displayed extraordinary gifts of extemporaneous speech, but I have never yet met one to compare with Dr. Dale in his youth for readiness and vigour and richness of extemporaneous utterance. It is true that, at first, there was a wasteful opulence and luxuriance in his style, but he quickly and severely pruned this over-growth of language; the florid colours of this spring blossoming were soon shed. I can remember, however, that even then, along with this wealth of speech, there was a strenuous vigour—a momentum in the march of his thought, which gave a great cogency and impressiveness to his speeches in debate and to his sermons; and we all felt then, what many have felt since, that it needed a certain courage to meet the onset of his charge in our college debates. There was thus foreshadowed, even in these early years, that which I deem the supreme characteristic of his pulpit oratory, namely, a measured insistent vehemence which you felt as his periods rose and fell with a certain thunderous force, and urged and carried his audience with them on their long majestic sweep, as of Atlantic billows.[1]

[1] *The Reasonableness of the Evangelic Faith:* a Memorial Discourse preached at Park Hill Church, Nottingham, by the Rev. J. B. Paton, M.A. D.D., 1895.

The summer vacation of 1849 marked an important stage in his development. The months were full of varied experience. Five weeks were spent in London; four at Andover, or in the immediate neighbourhood. He saw Salisbury and Stonehenge and Winchester. He mixed with people, and in contact with the world began to lose some of the shyness that oppressed him in the society of strangers. He preached a good deal—"often enough," he says, "to pay all my expenses and to stock my purse pretty well for the session." One of the sermons was delivered in London, and his mother was present in the congregation; it had always been her dream and her prayer that her son should enter the ministry, and she now saw her desire in the way of accomplishment. To him the occasion was somewhat of an ordeal. "I did not feel quite so much at preaching before her as I feared, but it was rather an effort"—such was the account which he gave to a friend; what his mother felt is not recorded.

Before the vacation ended—in the early part of September—he was greatly startled by a sudden summons to occupy the pulpit at Carr's Lane. Mr. James was out of health, and, needing help, sent for him to take the sermon on the Sunday morning. Such an invitation was an unusual distinction for a student who had not yet reached the Theological Class, but it was not without its terrors. However, Mr. James's genial and affectionate hospitality put his guest at ease. The old man was "brimful of kindness"; and although many subjects were discussed upon which the two were not of one mind, nothing disturbed the harmony of the visit. The talk on the Sunday evening must have left a lasting impression on Dale's mind, for the purport of it was still distinct in his memory ten or eleven years later.

After supper on Sunday evening we sat talking for a couple of hours about preaching; one of us with the ardent hopefulness with which the greatest of all human callings is not unfrequently anticipated; the other with the solemnity produced by the memory of many years of ministerial responsibility, but brightening

often into a most genial sympathy with the sanguine enthusiasm of youth.

He explained, with characteristic simplicity and frankness, the principles by which he had been guided in the structure of his sermons, and threw out many suggestions on the art of preaching, which seemed to me at the time very valuable for their good sense and practical wisdom. The details of the conversation have faded from my memory; two things only can I remember with any distinctness—the warmth and animation with which, in responding to some vehement expression of my sense of the nobleness and glory of the preacher's vocation, he said that a passion for preaching was a sure pledge of success; and the earnestness with which he spoke of "usefulness" as the one great end which a minister should propose to himself in all his labours.[1]

His own account of this, his first Sunday at Carr's Lane, is contained in a letter to his parents written two days later.

TO MR. AND MRS. R. DALE

LEAMINGTON, *September* 1849.

Lest you should think that my duties last Sabbath quite frightened me to death, I take this, the earliest opportunity, of informing you that I am excellently well. Mr. James received me very kindly, and we had a good long chat together on Saturday evening. I determined to "take no thought for the morrow," lest it should alarm me. And though, when I got to bed, the pulpit at Carr's Lane would keep thrusting itself before my eyes, by thinking on the most interesting subject that occurred to me I kept it pretty well out of my head, nor did I give any thought to the thing till between nine and ten o'clock. I then looked through my sermon, and, as it was a fine bright morning, preferred walking down. At the church meeting on Friday Mr. James announced that I should preach, but as it was Ordinance Sunday this made no difference in the congregation. There were about 2300 or 2400 people there. I took the matter very quietly, and determined not to be nervous, although I could not throw my arms about quite so freely as at Andover. Mr. James expressed himself greatly pleased, and several of the influential members came in and thanked me for the sermon. At the Ordinance John Angell was pleased to speak of "the inimitable simplicity, beauty, and Scriptural propriety" of the

[1] *Life of J. A. James*, by R. W. Dale, p. 459.

discourse they had just heard. I opened service for him at night: there was a splendid gathering. After supper we had another long talk. He assured me that great success was within my grasp, that I should find no trouble in preaching, and said many other things of the same sort, exhorting me to keep head and heart in true condition.

Such success might well turn a young man's head; and Mrs. Glover—one of the founders of the college—an old lady of great sagacity and kindness, took it upon herself to counteract the effect of Mr. James's generous praise.

I had a message from her on the Monday morning that she wanted to speak to me. I called, and for half an hour she said nothing of exceptional importance, but as I rose to go she said, "Oh, my dear, I hear that Mr. James said some kindly things about your sermon in his address at the Lord's Supper. Well, you must not mind; it is only his way."

It must have been a mortification to vanity, but the hint was neither resented nor forgotten.

A visit to Leamington, involving sundry sermons and speeches, brought the vacation to a close.

With the opening of the new session in the autumn, Aged 20. Dale entered upon a new stage in his college career. His relations with Mr. James became more intimate. He was a frequent guest at the Saturday dinners at which it was Mr. James's habit to entertain the students. In one of his letters he refers to a conversation between his host and Mr. Rogers "on half a dozen of the most interesting subjects under the sun"; he and his two companions, he adds, "had the discretion to be quiet," while their elders talked, and they were rewarded for their silence. This, the third year of his course, brought him into the Theological Class. He attended lectures on preaching, and also took his place in the list of students who were ready to "supply" at such churches as might require their services.

It is clear that he was deeply interested in his new studies. Not content with the instruction and discussion of the lecture-room, he took the lead in establishing a theological society for the interchange of thought among

its members on subjects especially interesting to students for the Christian ministry. The meetings were held monthly, the members presiding in turn. He acted as secretary, and read the first paper, taking for his subject "The Historical Element in Christianity." At first no one could be elected to membership except by a unanimous vote—a rule securing that unity, not of opinion but of aim, which is indispensable to the success of such a gathering. After eighteen months the rule was relaxed, and before long the record of the proceedings suddenly breaks off. Among the other subjects introduced for discussion were the Atonement, Prayer, the Lord's Supper, and Inspiration. It would not be easy to overestimate the value of meetings of this kind in encouraging young men to deal with great subjects, and to express their thoughts and feelings upon the gravest problems of life without affectation or restraint. To many such intercourse has proved far more helpful and stimulating than lectures, however learned and profound; and even in a great university there are not a few who look back upon hours so spent in free and unfettered talk with companions of their own age as the truest seed-time of life's later harvest.

Dale's own enthusiasm for his future calling was in steady growth. Keen as were his interests in philosophical and theological speculation, he kept before his mind the conditions of success in the practical work of the ministry, recognising how large a part the human heart and human experience must ever have in the making of a true teacher. In this mood, writing to his friend Glanville—who was kept away from college for a time by illness—by way of consolation for enforced absence, he says:—

To Mr. E. S. Glanville

October 1849.

So you see, my dear fellow, there is nothing for you to fret about. College work you will easily get up; and you are probably learning—consciously or not—lessons in the chamber which could not be taught in the study. Every day adds to the strength

of my conviction that what we really want in the ministry is neither more learning nor more eloquence but more of burning ardour and unconquerable zeal. In the pulpit we need a logic of the heart which Aristotle cannot teach. A living faith in things unseen is worth all the systematic theology that shelves ever groaned under. Remember this, if you are at all depressed by being kept from work. Depend upon it that God never subjects a man to a discipline unsuited to develop and perfect his nature. What you have been suffering for the last few months is certainly the best possible thing for you. Remember Who it was that was "made perfect through suffering." Ay! ay! the day will come when this dark time will shine out with bright meaning.

But even still, in looking forward to the future, he had his seasons of difficulty and depression, and in another letter, written almost at the same time, his sense of infirmity and helplessness finds expression.

To Mrs. Cash

October 1849.

Your Christian sympathy and kind prayers I deeply value. Still entreat the Father of Lights to grant me guidance into all truth. Esteeming it a duty to look a doubt fairly in the face, I am not a stranger to seasons of strenuous mental conflict, and at such times I feel how inexpressible is the worth of that heavenly direction which our common Father grants in answer to believing prayer. But though these seasons of conflict are dark and sad, I would not be without them. I do not envy those who walk through life with no questionings, no mental struggles. The man who never doubted his own creed can hardly be able to meet the ten thousand objections that a keen thinker can raise against every doctrine that was ever believed by man. However, I think that my heart is in greater danger than my head. If I can but keep my affections set on things above, my faith in Christ Jesus strong, my love to Him deep and fervent, all will be well. But if, on the contrary, zeal flags, devotion cools, hope dies, faith weakens,—then though the creed is as orthodox as that of Paul himself, everything goes wrong. God save me from spiritual slumber.

His power as a preacher was now becoming known, and his services were widely sought for. He was often the first choice of those who applied to the college for help.

On one occasion his popularity betrayed him into what might have been very serious trouble. His fellow-student, the Rev. P. C. Barker,[1] gives the following account of the incident :—

Besides the inflexible rule for a six-year course student, that no preaching was allowed in term time during the initiatory two years, there was another rule applying to the whole six years, which contributed very largely to the successful university studies and remarkable achievements of the Spring Hill College men of that period—that no *week-evening* public engagements, whether of preaching or of speaking, were permitted. The enormous public meetings of such a town as Birmingham might be attended without any restriction whatsoever, and it was held that an ample *quid pro quo* was received in the opportunity that young speakers thus had of observing notable orators and their varieties of elocution, and of unconsciously learning modes of public speech that might stand them in good stead in years to come; while the immense sacrifice of time that would have been consumed in preparation, and the physical exhaustion inevitably consequent, were avoided. The grounds of the restriction were both reasonable and obvious, nor had there been any serious challenge of the restriction on the part of Dale and others. By a few outsiders, who knew Dale's oratorical powers, the net was spread, in comparative ignorance, rather than with any malevolence either to Dale or the college authorities; and that it was not spread in vain in the sight of such a one as Dale was undeniably matter of great amazement to those who knew him best. The meeting was to be held in the Town Hall; and Dale went so far as to allow his name to appear on the bills. The concern of the college authorities, and of Mr. James, was very great. It needs not to be said that the eyes of all his fellow-students were on him, some with ill-concealed sympathy, some with unconcealed disapproval. He and they knew the certain result if he refused to retrace his steps—a great deal hung on the way in which this was finally conveyed to him. It was a critical moment, and the sound of his foot-fall, as he crossed the hall one afternoon, echoes still in one living ear. After a conflict, that none but himself could measure, he had yielded and surrendered.

The mortification was severe ; of that there can be no doubt ; but after its bitterness had abated, he was still to

[1] Now Vicar of Priddy, Wells, Somerset.

be found in the Hall on any occasion of interest. He was very catholic in his sympathies: religion and politics drew him with equal force. The Wesleyans held a great meeting; he was there.

"Some say I led the cheering," he writes, "and as I was standing on the corner of the platform, and cheered just when it came into my head, without caring for anybody else, that is possible. And, moreover, we had Scholefield, Lushington, Cobden, Bright, and Thompson here on Tuesday evening—didn't I cheer?"

The last phrase is characteristic. If he was a good speaker, he was equally good as a listener. Many a time he has made a speaker's fortune with that quick response which often seemed to put a match to a meeting, or with the laugh that was the first to break the chilling silence, and still rang out clear above the roar when the crowd had cast off its apathy and had found a voice.

A little later he heard Edward Miall, for whose character and ability he had already conceived a hearty admiration. He was one of those who in the early years of the *Nonconformist* followed its utterances week by week with growing enthusiasm, turning with infinite relief from the platitudes and conventionalities of the larger portion of the denominational press to listen to a man who in enlightenment, conviction, and breadth of view, stood without peer or rival among the Nonconformist journalists of his day. His spirit was stirred by the vigour and courage of the *Nonconformist* during the commotion of 1848, while so many editors—Dr. Campbell among them—were singing the praises of Louis Philippe, "the wily grey beard," and were denouncing the French Republic and its leaders. And with generous vehemence he resented the suspicion and the hostility which Miall encountered among those who should have been his natural friends and allies. To him, as to many others, Miall was much more than a leader: they regarded him as a master; they were trained in his school; they perpetuated his thought; and they carried on the great controversy with the Established Church in his spirit.

Two more years passed without any incident of note, nor is there any record of his doings when away from
Aged 21½. college. The summer of 1851 was a time of greater activity, and in his letters there are many references to the experiences which it brought. For four Sundays he preached at Belper, in Derbyshire. It was a little country church, where he was brought into close contact with the members of the congregation. Nothing could have been better for him than this sustained responsibility and the more familiar intercourse with those to whom he ministered. For, according to his own account, he still suffered from "an inordinate horror of strangers," and caught at any way of escape. The remaining weeks were spent, partly in Hampshire, partly in London. The intellectual and religious state of the city stirred him profoundly; and as the close of his college course came in view, he began to look forward with growing anxiety to the special form of service that the necessities of the time demanded. He unburdens his mind in a letter to Mrs. Cash.

To Mrs. Cash

London, *September* 1851.

London is indeed in a state of activity. Everything is moving. Never before had I been so impressed with the peculiar influences at work in a great metropolis as during my late visit. It happened that I had opportunities of looking a little under the surface at the intellectual and moral ferment in which especially the young and thoughtful minds of London are living. They seem to find rest nowhere. All faith in religion and philosophy seems to have been lost, and there is a loud and earnest cry for some teacher to arise and lead them into a better and nobler way. Very sad it is to see so much thought and energy wasted like water thrown on a rock. We Christians are greatly wanting in concern for the welfare and right guidance of these young men. We know little about them and seem to care less. The result must be an alienation from Christianity of a great mass of thoughtful but ill-disciplined men who, under better teaching and the charm of honest, affectionate sympathy, might have been the strength and joy of our churches. What to do now, it is difficult to say; but unless something is done, and well done, shortly, their state will become almost incurable. I

suppose the great thing is for us to cling more closely to Christ, to catch more of His spirit, and to invigorate our faith in His gospel as the one great remedy for all human evil. This would tell at once. But while our own piety is so weak and worthless that we are always in trouble about our own salvation, of course little can be done. How Paul would have been fettered if he had been compassed by all the fears and perplexities which many modern Christians experience all their life long. Free, hearty, and earnest work for Christ is simply impossible while this state of things continues. Napoleon would never have swept the kings of Europe from their thrones if he had been the general of an army of invalids; and the great battle of Truth and Holiness will never be won till there is a manliness, a courage, and a freedom about us, that at present we have little enough of. This then must be the object of intense effort and earnest prayer—the purity and power of the Church. You see I have got into a sermon again; but I do feel very much about this matter. I have been almost appalled at the scepticism and mad hatred of Christianity and Christians I have witnessed lately.

For him it was evidently a season of strain and conflict. In a letter to Glanville, who also had been suffering, though in other ways, he says:—

To Mr. E. S. Glanville

September 1851.

This has been a very strange vacation to me, and from your note I suppose that you too have had clouds and tempest. It is the old doctrine—"through much tribulation"; let us be thankful that the same Book tells us "as thy day, thy strength shall be." Though I can say nothing that can contribute to your peace and strength, I could not help writing something. May God bless you, my dear, dear friend, and bring "peaceable fruits of righteousness" out of your late sorrows. What I should have done of late without the assurance that the highest Wisdom and tenderest Love regulate all things, I know not. I can now testify more firmly than ever that there is something in being a Christian.

It is natural to ask what was the exact nature of the inward trials to which his letters so often refer. The language in which he describes them implies something more than spiritual darkness and depression; it points to

a period of doubt during which his hold on the central truths of the Christian faith was altogether relaxed. But even when he wrote with least reserve, his words conceal as much as they disclose, and do not enable us to answer the question with certainty. There is, however, one passage in which he unmistakably alludes to his experience at this time, and on the strength of it we shall not be wrong in assuming that the fabric of his earlier faith fell away from him, leaving Christ as the one certainty in a world of mist and cloud. Whatever else be lost or submerged—creeds, Scripture, the Gospel narratives themselves—

> The battle is virtually won if you come to believe that in Jesus of Nazareth God was manifest in the flesh, and that it is your first and highest duty to bow before Him with penitence for your sin and trust in His mercy. And I can promise you, on the strength of the experience of one who, like yourselves, once saw his early faith covered with a boundless sea of darkness, that if you once reach a firm belief in this fundamental fact, the waters shall some day begin to ebb—shall drain down to the depths whence they came; and, as the flood retires, that solitary truth—the manifestation of God in the person of Christ—shall gradually be surrounded by province after province of divine revelation, beautiful with fresh verdure and pleasant streams, and rich with yellow harvests; and, hidden deep beneath the soil, there shall be a secret treasure of wisdom and of joy: the gold and the crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.[1]

It is a familiar experience, especially to students of theology who learn for themselves how true are the words of the Jewish sage concerning wisdom :—

> At the first she will walk with him in crooked ways,
> And will bring fear and dread upon him,
> And torment him with her discipline,
> Until she may trust his soul, and try him by her judgments :
> Then will she return again the straight way unto him,
> And will gladden him, and reveal to him her secrets.[2]

After the college session opened, his preaching work

1 "From Doubt to Faith." *Exeter Hall Lectures*, 1864, pp. 12, 13.
2 *Ecclesiasticus*, iv. 17, 18.

steadily increased, not only in Birmingham but in the Midland counties generally; and during the following summer he visited a wide range of country, preaching at Cheltenham, Bristol, Kidderminster, and Stafford. He also spent a fortnight or more in the Isle of Man, taking the services at Douglas. His stay there was most enjoyable: he met many old friends—for it was a popular resort of Birmingham people—and made new ones; among them Mr. Stallybrass, the minister of the church, and his wife, to whom he was greatly drawn. He also preached at Leamington once, if not twice. Before his visit, in a letter to Mrs. Cash he says: "I must try to give you some real gospel truth when I come to Leamington, must I not?" showing that he still remembered, not without a touch of resentment, some previous objection taken to his preaching, with which he had been made acquainted. He defended himself with vigour; and the way in which he met the accusation of not preaching the gospel is eminently characteristic.

To Mrs. Cash

[1851?]

I am much obliged by your frank and friendly remarks about my sermons last Sabbath. If everybody were as frank with everybody, the wheels of the world would run more easily. Conscious, however, of a full-hearted faith in Christ, and that my endeavour is to derive the whole substance and form of my religious life and thought from Him, I felt a little surprised that anybody should think my preaching deficient in gospel truth, whatever else I may lack; and none can speak more sincerely than I do about the deficiencies of my preaching. But whatever darkness and weakness there may be in my public addresses, this I know to be the central purpose and ruling passion of my heart—to make all who are about me know more of Christ, love Him more, trust Him more, serve Him more. I should very much like to see the good lady who talked about the German theologian, whose name I think she could not have given you correctly, that I might ask her reasons for suspecting me of the very faintest tendency to desert the heart and life of our Evangelical faith. I am perfectly amazed that any member of Mr. Pope's congregation should entertain such a thought for

an instant. Did she hear the last three sermons I delivered in Spencer Street before my late visit, on the texts "For me to live is Christ," "I am the bread of life," "I am dead, nevertheless I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"? Whether I succeeded or not, the aim of the first sermon was to show that religion consists in the consecration of the whole soul and character to Christ; of the second to show that Christ is the only life and strength of the soul; and of the third to illustrate and enforce the duty of accepting Christ so fully and unreservedly as the ruler of the soul, that we may "die unto sin." "Christ," I said, "should work by our hands, think in our thoughts, and live again on the earth in our work and endurance."

The sermon I preached last Sunday evening was an attempt to point out as clearly and as earnestly as I could a fatal delusion about the gospel that destroys many; a delusion leading them to suppose that faith in Christ and a seeking of His mercy are consistent with a clinging to sin. In short the whole sum of the sermon was this—"Repent, and believe the gospel." Perhaps the good lady you refer to would wish me to leave out "Repent," and only command men in God's name to "believe," whether they repent or not.

And now as to the morning's sermon.

1. Is it a duty to "worship God"?
2. Do all men discharge the duty?
3. Do even Christians properly understand the duty?
4. Are we never to insist on any other command except this one—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"?
5. Does Mr. Pope leave the congregation in Spencer Street in such lamentable ignorance of the elementary principles of the gospel, that every "supply" should make it his great and only duty to teach you what are the first principles of the gospel of God?

I dare say your friend would say, that the true cause of complaint lies in not introducing into the sermon some reference to the plan of Salvation (but I did make such reference, I am sure), or rather a full statement of the privileges of the gospel. Now, according to my notion, our duty in preaching is just to take the command or doctrine that the Spirit of God has written in the book and preach about that. And since God's Spirit has thought it necessary to write about other things beside the Atonement, I suppose it is necessary to preach about other things too. How I should like to face your friend who talks about the German theologian, and ask whether she does not think it a great waste of room in the Bible to have so much about Jewish kings, and Jonah's whale, and the marrying of the

patriarchs, and the moral discourses of Christ, instead of having the gospel in Genesis, in Judges, in Kings, and all through. The gospel is everywhere in the Bible, in one sense; but if your friend had had the writing of the Bible, I think she would have had it everywhere in a somewhat different sense.

The fact is, that, filled with an unfounded alarm, people are getting into the habit of listening with nervous anxiety to every student they happen to hear, and every time they hear him, to discover whether he has any leaning to Germanism. This is not fair to the students, nor are those who do it fair to themselves. And I think, too, that at Spencer Street we Spring Hill men ought to be able to preach without the misery of being conscious all the time that the hearers are watching and waiting for some trace of heresy.

Your own motives and spirit in speaking to me I feel to be only and altogether kind, and I should not have referred to the matter at such length had it not been for the good lady and her German scarecrow.

He felt strongly about the matter, and wrote as he felt. Some of the warmth was due to the fact that he had met with criticism of the same kind elsewhere. At his first visit to Hanley, in the Staffordshire Potteries, some of the congregation had taken alarm at his preaching, and had gone so far as to request the college authorities that Mr. Dale should not be sent to Hanley again. Among his personal friends who knew his heart, there was much indignation and some amusement. But whatever suspicion existed in the minds of any of the people, it must soon have died out, for before the summer vacation of the year 1852 he was surprised by receiving an urgent invitation to accept the pastorate of the Tabernacle Church in that town. The vote of the church in his favour was unanimous, and private letters which came with the formal invitation laid stress upon the fact that he was the one man on whom they could all unite; who could hold discordant elements together; and who would be sure to win the attention of the town at large—"the very man," they said, "to strengthen, settle, and establish us."

At the time only one reply was possible. His college course still had fifteen months to run, and there were serious objections to pledging himself so long in advance.

He had also committed himself—as will be presently explained—to an engagement with Mr. James for the following year; and though the arrangement was of a temporary nature, it had been entered into with a view to a more permanent settlement. It would, therefore, he felt, "have been a singular breach of good faith, after consenting to try the introductory experiment," if he were "at once to turn aside from the ultimate object to which that experiment was intended to lead"; and though Hanley, and the prospect of independent and vigorous enterprise that it afforded, had very strong attractions for him, he had no choice but to decline. Eight months later the invitation was renewed, and with even greater cordiality; but the relations into which he had then entered with Mr. James and the church at Carr's Lane had already become too close to be broken.

CHAPTER IV

SETTLEMENT AT CARR'S LANE

Early history of Carr's Lane Church—Mr. James: his work and character; the secret of his success—Solicitude for Dale as a future colleague—First overtures—Dale's diffidence and inclination—The experiment begins—Spiritual conflict—Hopes for the old church and a new people—University medallist—Appointed assistant: letter to Mr. James accepting the offer—Difficulties of the situation—A misunderstanding dispelled—Nearer prospect of the co-pastorate—Appointed co-pastor—Difficulties with the trust-deed—The church-meeting for election—Mr. James's joy: Dale's reply—Death of his mother—Ordination in Congregational churches—The ordination services—Marriage and married life.

IT is not necessary to record with any fulness of detail the incidents that led to Dale's settlement at Carr's Lane; but the appointment so deeply affected the whole of his after life and the history of the church with which he thus became associated, that some outline of the history is indispensable.

In the summer of 1852 Mr. James entered on his sixty-eighth year. He had then been the pastor of Carr's Lane Church for forty-seven years, having entered upon his ministry in 1805, when he was only just twenty. The earlier history of the congregation over which he was called to preside is not without interest. The church was an embodied protest against Arianism. It had been founded in 1747 by a few devout men who seceded from the Old Meeting, where up to that time the principles of Calvinism had been held and taught. But now Unitarian opinions prevailed among its members, and a preacher in sympathy with their views was chosen by a majority. After an ineffectual protest, the orthodox minority with-

drew, leaving the place in the possession of their opponents who became the centre of Unitarianism in Birmingham, while they settled in a new meeting-house of their own. Four ministers followed one another during the next half-century, the last of them—the Rev. Jehoiada Brewer—resigning in 1802. For some time no appointment was made, but in September 1804, John Angell James, after preaching for several Sundays during his summer vacation—for he was still a student—was asked to fill the vacant pastorate. He accepted the call; but still having a year of his college course to complete, he did not enter upon his work till the following summer. He found the fortunes of the church at a low ebb: its prosperity had been seriously affected, at first by internal dissensions—Mr. Brewer having carried off half of the members with him—and then by the want of a settled minister. At the time of Mr. James's appointment, the congregation did not number more than 150; and for the next six or seven years its increase was slow. Then followed a period of rapid development and growing prosperity. A new chapel on the same site was opened in 1820, to hold the crowds which Mr. James's ministry had attracted. The members on the church roll, as distinct from the congregation, were counted by the hundred; and their number eventually reached a thousand. Carr's Lane became a great centre of spiritual force, and its pastor exerted an influence extending far beyond the town and its neighbourhood. He became one of the most famous preachers of his time. His books made their way in all directions. One of them, *The Anxious Enquirer*—of which we have heard already—a series of addresses intended for persons who were earnestly desiring to begin to live a religious life, had an extraordinary success: within five years of publication, 200,000 copies had been put in circulation; before Mr. James's death the sale had reached half a million, and the book had been translated into a dozen languages. In addition to his work as author and preacher, Mr. James also gave much time and strength to organised effort in association with others. He was enthusiastic in his support

of foreign missions, especially as represented by the London Missionary Society. He took a leading part in the foundation of the Evangelical Alliance, designed to unite Protestant Christendom in defence of the truths which its Churches held in common. He was one of those who attempted to draw the Congregational churches of England more closely together by the formation of the Congregational Union. By his labours in behalf of Spring Hill College he had rendered important service to the cause of ministerial education. His reputation and his influence were recognised not only in the churches of his own order, but far beyond denominational limits. Such a position is not attained or kept without genuine force of character and exceptional endowments. There is a wide distinction between popularity and power. Popularity may be, and often is, the result, not of a man's strength but of his weakness: it may be won by inflated rhetoric, by eccentricity, by the avoidance—whether unconscious or deliberate—of unpalatable truth, by stimulating and satisfying the craving for sensational excitement. But power—the power that builds up a church; that sustains its energies and vigour through many years; that brings comfort in sorrow, strength in weakness, succour in temptation; that transforms abstract truth into a living fact and a controlling law;—power of this kind is no common gift: where it is found, it cannot exist apart from some high and noble qualities; though the qualities vary in different men. What were the elements to which Mr. James was indebted for his success?

He himself has answered the question in a fragment of autobiography, as modest as it is acute in the recognition of his own limitations. He frankly avows that he lacked learning and originality; that he was neither philosopher nor critic. His own intellect was not adventurous, and he could "start no mind upon a new track of investigation and career of discovery." No glimpses of undiscovered truths, he tells us, have flashed upon his soul. He describes himself as "a mere plodding, working husbandman, using old implements with some industry, and

following old methods with a kind of dogged perseverance and considerable success." He was keenly alive to the glory and the responsibility of his vocation, and his motto throughout his ministry had always been, "They watch for souls, as they that shall give account." But earnestness for the salvation of men, and a resolute adherence to time-honoured methods, were by no means his only qualifications: he possessed other gifts, without which he would have been shorn of half his strength. He had the voice, the presence, the instinct of the orator; and after a few years of comparative indolence and indifference, he had carefully developed and disciplined the natural resources of his eloquence. Further, he was distinguished by sagacity and shrewdness in an exceptional degree. He understood men, and knew how to deal with them both in the mass and as individuals. His acquaintance with the human heart, in its inmost recesses, was wide and intimate. The weaknesses of human nature, and the remedies of weakness, were familiar to him. If there was no originality in his methods of treatment, no enterprise in his science, he had the skill of an experienced spiritual physician. And all these qualities were crowned by a simplicity, absolutely devoid of affectation or pretension, and incapable of any meanness or smallness. Those to whom his confidence was given found him affectionate, generous, and loyal. It is impossible, even now, to read his more private letters, in which we see him as he was, without a stirring at the heart and a profound sense of his goodness and greatness.

After so many years of labour, with the fiftieth anniversary of his settlement close at hand, conscious of increasing age and of failing strength, it was but natural that Mr. James should contemplate with grave anxiety his retirement from the ministry and the changes that it would involve. It was not in him to exert any undue pressure, or to attempt to force his own preference upon his people; but the choice which they would have to make was one of critical importance, and he was anxious to help them to choose wisely, and in such a way that he might be able to look forward to the future of the church

with assured confidence. The matter was continually present to his mind, and such was his solicitude, as he stated in one of his addresses, that he never entered his pulpit on a Sunday morning without a silent prayer that when he should be taken from it, the church might be united in the choice of a successor.

Soon after Dale entered college, Mr. James's thoughts seem to have turned to him. He treated the young student with exceptional kindness, and manifested an active concern for his spiritual welfare. A notable instance of this fatherly solicitude is recorded in his Biography. Reports had reached him that Dale was in danger of drifting into heresy or scepticism, and one Saturday he sent a note to the college inviting the student to dine with him in the afternoon: as a general rule, the party consisted of three or four, but on that day Dale found himself a solitary guest.

I wondered what would be the explanation of this. At dinner there was as much freedom and cordiality on his part as usual, perhaps more. After dinner, he asked me to walk upstairs with him into his study. As soon as we sat down, he drew his chair to the front of the fire, and bringing his great face close to mine he said, "Mr. Dale, may I speak plainly to you?" "As plainly as you like, sir," was the reply. Then came out what he had heard, and what he feared. I answered him very frankly, and, as he might have justly thought, somewhat presumptuously; but, instead of reminding me of my youth, and the crudeness of my intellectual condition, he talked with me as familiarly and freely about the points on which we differed, as though he had been a lad of my own age; with far greater toleration, indeed, of what he thought my mistakes, than a lad of my own age would have manifested.

He was Chairman of the Board of Education, and some of his practical recommendations to which I demurred he might have authoritatively enforced; but with admirable patience and wisdom he never passed beyond simple argument and advice. Though his counsels, I am sorry to say, failed to influence me, the discovery which I made that afternoon of the simplicity and generosity of his temper, and his genuine and deep concern for what he believed to be my spiritual and intellectual perils, effected a complete revolution in my feelings towards him; from that time, though it was only gradually that I came to feel his

power, I venerated his goodness, and felt that in any trouble he would be a most faithful friend.[1]

Eighteen months later, as we have already seen, at the close of the summer vacation of 1849, Dale was unexpectedly summoned to preach at Carr's Lane in an emergency; and rather more than a year after this, Mr. James begged him to listen to "no hint or solicitation about settling with a congregation without first consulting" him. In November 1851 he went a step farther, and expressed his desire that Dale, during his last year at college, should give him occasional help, with the prospect of becoming his assistant at the end of another year. The plan, however, was to remain a profound secret until the time for action should arrive. With this project in his mind, Mr. James took every opportunity of bringing Dale under the notice of the church; and in the autumn of 1852 he began by arrangement to preach regularly at Carr's Lane on the first Sunday morning in every month, when the Communion service which followed ensured a large attendance of church members, while it laid an additional tax on the pastor's strength. He also preached at other times as often as Mr. James required his help.

Aged 23. To many men of Dale's age, such a position and its prospects would have been supremely attractive: they had no charm for him. At that time he looked forward to studying in Germany for a few sessions after leaving college; and the engagement at Carr's Lane would compel him to relinquish this plan. He had other and weightier reasons for reluctance. Even if he should prove successful while associated with Mr. James in the work of the ministry, he had no confidence that such success would continue if at any time the sole charge devolved upon himself. He had grave doubts as to the stability of the church at Carr's Lane. Soon after he first came to Birmingham he had predicted, with an excess of dogmatism, that "the church will go to pieces as soon as Mr. James goes to heaven": the congregation

[1] *Life of John Angell James*, p. 458.

appeared to him as a mere mass of heterogeneous elements, "without any principle of cohesion save the name — John Angell James." This, he says, "binds them like a spell." And in perfect unconsciousness of his own destiny he adds, "God bless his successor!"

It is probable that longer experience and fuller knowledge may have led him to modify these earlier impressions, but the conditions of ministerial activity in such a church were not such as appealed most strongly to his sympathy. Had he been free to follow his own inclination, he would have sought for work of a very different type. In Birmingham, at Hanley, and elsewhere, he had already attempted to reach the men and women who were not brought into contact with the ordinary work of the churches. The movement to evangelise the irreligious masses in the great towns was then gathering strength: it seemed to open up new possibilities of service, and Dale believed that this was the special work to which he had been called. The scheme which he had cherished in imagination was "to find a small congregation of poor people in the heart of a manufacturing district, and to make it the pivot and centre of an active system of evangelistic labours among the surrounding myriads of working people." This dream, too, had to be abandoned; and it was abandoned very reluctantly.

The sacrifice was severe. But Dale had already mastered the truth on which he laid such stress in later years—that the man who disregards duty to follow ideals of his own, however noble, who thinks first of his own preferences, or even of his own powers, and chooses his work instead of taking up the work to which he is called, is imperilling much more than mere success. And in his own case, after long and anxious consideration, there seemed to be no alternative, no way of escape. The post was not of his own seeking: the work had sought him. He had won Mr. James's confidence and affection. The people listened to him with growing interest. The church seemed made for him—and he for the church. To refuse

the invitation was practically out of the question. So, in the autumn of 1852, the experiment began, without any enthusiasm on his part, but with a loyal resolve to do his best for Mr. James and for Carr's Lane, and to walk steadfastly along the path of duty into which he had been led. However, before many months had passed, there were signs of increasing hopefulness. Writing to a friend, in December 1852, he says:—

So far, all things seem prosperous. Mr. James seems well pleased, and expresses himself in his usual emphatic way in approbation of my proceedings. The people are more than cordial; the congregations, as yet, all that heart could wish; and some, I am told, who were at first rather opposed to my coming, are now among the number of my friends. And I myself begin to like the place, and to feel some warmth of interest in the success of the project.

Another letter, written a few months later, enters into fuller detail, and also gives some indication of the course of his inner life: seasons of conflict—alternations of ebb and flow in spiritual experience—still recurred; and at times the whole sky seemed overcast.

To Mrs. Cash

[1853.]

You will be interested to know that my connection with Mr. James is going on prosperously; the people seem sufficiently well pleased, and he too appears full of hope. Even I begin to feel a keener and deeper interest in the success of the experiment. You know that at first I was quite indifferent about the matter; felt it my clear and imperative duty to try, but rather hoped it might turn out against my continuance than not. I have not quite overcome my shrinking from the future to which success would bring me, but feel much more warmly towards the place than I did.

The young men and working people connected with the place and around it have fairly laid hold of my heart, and I should certainly like to try what may be done for them by a new and young hand.

You have probably heard how unwell Mr. James has been of late. He is now very much better: indeed he is quite himself

again. His indisposition laid a little extra work upon me necessarily, but he eases me as much as possible. I like him better and better the more I know of him; the inside is better than the outside.

I had a letter from your old friend, Mr. Guest, the other day. He was about to hold a series of revival services, and wrote a very pressing request that I should go and take part in them. His letter was of the emphatically earnest sort: his heart is evidently full of hope and enthusiasm; I was sorry to be obliged to decline; it might have done me good to get into the midst of a furnace. It is hard work — at least I find it so increasingly—to keep at all within sight of the *law* and the *example*. The whole process and movement of the interior life seems in my eyes day by day more mysterious. Seasons of depression, heavy, terrible, overwhelming, come over me apparently without any very definite cause; stay in spite of means which seem most powerful to effect their removal; and then suddenly break off and depart at the bidding of a single text of Scripture perhaps, or a single prayer, or a single word from a Christian friend; or a single train of commonplace reflections. The misery and astonishing folly is that one forgets so frequently what it has cost days of agony to learn, and only begins to remember it when immense mischief has already been brought about through forgetting it. If all the truths which have been realised and made precious by the successive eras of our religious progress, all the facts which at different times have assumed to our spiritual consciousness the hardness and grimness of a rock, all the wisdom which has come from the lips of others, or has been painfully learnt from doubt and difficulty and sin and folly, could be kept visibly and consciously before the mind, how different our life would be. Why, even that blessed text, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," which sometimes comes down on the heart like a whole heaven of peace and joy and glory, will at other times be as meaningless as the darkest sayings of the prophets, or as powerless as the vainest utterances of human folly. And then just as one is bemoaning its darkness, it will suddenly blaze out in astonishing brightness, and almost startle the heart by its revelations of safety and strength.

Perhaps we are sometimes driven out into the desert, right away from all joy and strength, that we may be made more meek and humble in our reproof of others who, we think, are forgetful of the central Life and Light and Love. How imperiously and vehemently we are tempted sometimes to reprove those who are shivering and trembling in darkness and cold, for

not coming to the Lord whom they know, but unaccountably forget. When such times of forgetfulness come upon ourselves we learn, not indeed to think less lightly of the sin of this forgetfulness, but to speak more lovingly to those who are guilty of it.

But these struggles, as he was well aware, came not from outward circumstances, but from natural temperament; change of place, change of work, would not put an end to them. And so he began to take root where he was. His feeling about Carr's Lane was also modified by the possibilities of future development which he now foresaw. At the outset he had been repelled—mainly, if not entirely—by the conventional respectability of the church and its members. A long course of prosperity, he thought, had made them unduly satisfied with things as they were; they lacked enterprise, were self-centred, and seemed incapable of any aggressive movement for the social and moral redemption of the vicious and the degraded. To the ardour and the enthusiasm of youth all this was intolerable: his ideal was, not to inherit history, but to make it. But now there was some prospect of a great and far-reaching change. Edgbaston, which had been a country parish on the outskirts of the town, was rapidly being transformed into a residential suburb. Its population was increasing every year; the necessity of providing religious accommodation for its wants was becoming urgent; and if Congregationalism failed to meet the call, it could not hold its own. A plan for building a chapel in Edgbaston was, therefore, set on foot—it was in fact suggested by Dale himself. Mr. James acquiesced, though not without reluctance. He felt that there was hardly room for a new church of new materials, and that whatever support the venture might secure must necessarily be drawn from churches already existing. Modern habits, he pointed out, were leading all the more substantial people out of the heart of the town, and a family when once withdrawn from Carr's Lane would not return. But to the younger man such a result, if it should be brought about, was far from

unwelcome: it gave promise of realising dreams and aspirations he had long cherished; and in a letter to his friend Glanville, he dwells on the prospect with delight.

To Mr. E. S. Glanville

[1853.]

This (Mr. James's objection) was rather a new view of the matter to me, but has suggested a glorious picture if the present treaty is concluded, and if it leads ultimately to a more permanent connection. My idea has always been that Carr's Lane, by its position in the town and by its size, must ultimately become the centre of Christian effort directed to the lower part of the middle and working classes, and that its present "respectability" must in a measure disappear if it is to retain any life and power; but I apprehended that this change would be in some measure a violent and forced thing. Does not this emigration of the higher people to the outskirts indicate very clearly that the natural tendency of Carr's Lane must be down to the gutters? And if so, has not Carr's Lane a future? May not this dissipate in some measure the terror that any man must feel at thinking of holding together the present people, or the present sort of people? I look at Mr. James's proposals now with greatly increased hopefulness. My former feeling was, If I can do anything to help him now, and if ultimately I can do anything to prevent or soften a break-up, it is my clear duty to listen to his offer. But now I seem to feel that it will be a place—if I should really occupy it—somewhat after my own heart. And I think, too, that it might get a minister who would be so anxious to retain the present honour and glory of the place, that he would sacrifice and check the new life and history which would naturally arise if the meaning and direction of its present and immediately coming affairs are understood and sympathised with. It would be ten thousand pities if this happened: to prevent Carr's Lane becoming what it must become if it is to live at all—the church of the multitude—would be to stop one of the finest and most hopeful movements conceivable.

It was well that he had other work to occupy his thoughts while the experiment was in progress. In the arrangement made between them, Mr. James had been careful to provide that the demands upon him for service in the pulpit should not be excessive. The London M.A.

examination, for which he was a candidate, took place in the following summer, and it was important that he should have abundant leisure for the work of preparation. Upon the necessity of this Mr. James laid great stress. Though no student himself, he set a high value upon accurate scholarship and the mental discipline afforded by the systematic study of philosophy. Even had his judgment been less decided, interest and affection would have made him anxious that his young friend should be free to do his best. The result of the examination surpassed the most sanguine hopes. In philosophy Dale stood first, and won the gold medal. To the friends of Spring Hill College his success was the more welcome owing to the fact that the medal had been awarded the year before to a fellow-student, the Rev. R. A. Redford; it was reserved for Dr. Paton a twelvemonth later to repeat his friend's achievement—no slight evidence of the enthusiasm with which Mr. Rogers had inspired his pupils.

In the summer of 1853 Dale's college course came to an end, and also the temporary engagement into which he had entered; it now became a question of some more permanent arrangement, and at a meeting held on 1st July the church was asked to sanction his appointment as assistant. Among Congregationalists—as he himself has explained—such an assistant has no official standing, no pastoral authority: he is only a private member of the church, who aids the pastor in certain kinds of ministerial duty; he may not have been ordained; in some churches custom might preclude him from administering baptism or presiding at the Lord's Supper. In most cases, if not universally, he is not chosen or appointed by the church, but by the pastor whom he assists. But in accordance with the spirit and principles of Congregationalism it is at least advisable that the church should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion on such an appointment.[1] Such was the course adopted on this occasion: the church was taken into counsel. The pastor himself proposed that Dale should be appointed "assistant preacher"—the title

[1] *Life of John Angell James*, p. 464.

"minister" is carefully avoided throughout—to share with him the duties of the pulpit and to render such other ministerial aid as he might require. This and other resolutions embodying the terms of the engagement were unanimously approved. The invitation was conveyed to Dale in an official letter—he had arranged to be away from Birmingham while the matter was under discussion—and Mr. James also wrote on his own behalf at the same time. His letter in reply to Mr. James shows with how deep a sense of responsibility he accepted the position now offered to him.

To Mr. James

Wallop, near Stockbridge,
7th July 1853.

You are not quite ignorant of how greatly I have trembled at even the distant and uncertain prospect of the responsibilities which you now invite me to undertake. In no circumstances would it be possible for me to enter upon the duties of the ministry without terror and distress at the possibility of my proving altogether unfit and unfaithful; and at Carr's Lane the interests to be affected by my failure or success are so vast that my apprehensions are necessarily greatly heightened and aggravated.

But I feel much as Moses must have felt when, with the mountains on one hand and the hosts of Egypt on the other, he was commanded to lead Israel across the Red Sea. God has left me no choice; and I therefore yield to your wish and that of the church, painfully conscious, indeed, of my weakness and ignorance, and yet with a deeply rooted confidence that, while following the pillar of cloud and of fire, I shall be sure of finding the heavenly manna and the living water which will meet all my wants and sustain and increase my vigour even under the pressure of all certain and possible difficulties. For the work that God sends us, I know that He gives wisdom and strength.

I cannot of course be insensible of the great encouragement afforded by your own hopefulness and confidence as to the result of this arrangement, and by the perfect unanimity of the church in passing the resolutions in reference to it; but I find still greater support in remembering that the decision of the church was not formed without long and earnest looking to God both on your part and theirs: you have acknowledged Him in all your

ways; He has surely directed your paths. And now that I am so soon coming to work with you, I beseech you to remember my youth and inexperience, the difficulties which I have to encounter in my own solitary and personal struggle with sin, my limited and shallow knowledge of that Book whose contents I have to expound and enforce, and of that fallen and mysterious human nature which the minister has to enlighten, rebuke, and by God's good help to persuade. Your prayers and sympathy and counsel and reproof are among the more human foundations of my hope. The prospect of being associated with you is a delight, and the conviction that you will be to me in the future, as you have been already, a wise, kind, frank counsellor and friend is the source of much strength. I shall not forget your promise of sending me before we meet some suggestions in reference to my future course. I shall receive them, and all the counsels with which you may favour me, with the most respectful deference and affectionate gratitude.

The situation was not without its difficulties—and even its dangers; this fact was clearly recognised on both sides. Where two men differ in character and temperament, in habits of thought and methods of expression, and are also separated by a wide interval of age, complete and cordial co-operation in ministerial work is no easy matter. Personal preferences spring up among their congregation; and such preferences often provoke party spirit. Jealousy, suspicion, distrust, are too readily excited; and the strife to which these passions give rise is fatal to the strength and peace of a church. Personal affection on the part of those who stand in such a relation to one another is indeed indispensable: but affection in itself is not enough; without frankness, forbearance, and an absolute loyalty, the strain must become intolerable. It was, perhaps, well both for Mr. James and his assistant that an opportunity of testing one another arose before negotiations were actually concluded. Dale had reason to believe that it was proposed to make him an assistant, not so much at Carr's Lane as at Lozells—a church in another part of the town, at that time without a pastor, and in straits. To accept an appointment on these terms, he felt, would compromise the future irretrievably. He was anxious—more

than anxious—to serve Mr. James and his people to the full extent of his powers. He was willing to be an assistant, and to remain an assistant, without any prospect of promotion, if they so wished. But if it was in their minds that in course of time he might come to share the pastorate, he was unwilling to commit himself at the outset to an arrangement that could not fail to disqualify him for any such position. He was wise enough to refer the matter to Mr. James at once, expressing what he thought and felt, without reserve, but with modesty and good temper. His letter was as follows :—

To Mr. James

28th May 1853.

For some time past I have had a conviction that it would be well to have some communication with you in order to prevent the possibility of my misunderstanding the nature of the position or the kind of work which will attach to the proposed assistantship at Carr's Lane. This conviction was strengthened by a conversation I had this morning with Mr. Williams of the Lozells.

It is now some time since he first mentioned to me that you thought that when I came to be more fully engaged with you, you might with myself be able to give the church at Lozells regular and continuous pulpit help. He told me this morning that you had spoken to him again about this plan a day or two ago. My sympathy with that unfortunate church is so strong that it would be a great delight to me to give them aid in any shape; but there seem to me to be several objections against this plan as Mr. Williams described it; and one or two of the objections are of such a general nature that to state them will, I think, enable you to judge how far my idea of the assistantship corresponds with your own.

The object of the assistantship I suppose to be, to relieve you as far as possible and necessary of that part of your pastoral work which can be done by deputy—especially to conduct Bible classes and attend to the schools—and to give you such help in the pulpit as you may wish to have; and thus to smooth the way, while undergoing a probation, for a near or distant co-pastorate. Hence the position and duties of the assistant should be such as to make the transition to the co-pastor as easy as

possible; and it would seem to be of great importance that there should be as little as possible in his official position while assistant to increase in the eyes of the people that immense distance, morally and personally, which must separate him from yourself. The plan in reference to Lozells of which Mr. Williams was speaking this morning will serve, I think, to illustrate what would appear to me to be a violation of this principle.

Of course, if the plan were carried into effect, it would be only natural and right—and it would be in perfect harmony with my own feeling—that you should be in the Lozells pulpit far less frequently than myself; and the whole working of the Lozells would fall more naturally into my hands than yours. The result would be that to the people both there and at Carr's Lane, I should appear to be your assistant at Lozells and your occasional helper at Carr's Lane; or rather, a kind of superior town missionary with a preaching station at Lozells. Now personally I should not care one whit about this; but would this inferiority of position be likely to aid or hinder the securing that respect and confidence from the church and people at Carr's Lane, which it will and ought to be the hardest thing for your colleague—whoever he may be—to gain?

If it were understood that your assistant is intended to remain an assistant only, I should ask for no explanations, but engage to do anything and everything, anywhere and everywhere; for both in your justice and generous consideration I have unlimited confidence. But as it seems to be your wish that the assistant, if faithful and efficient, should ultimately become co-pastor, the future must be considered as well as the present; and you wish, I am sure, to keep that future in view in all your arrangements. I have written because I think that there may be some things in the aspect of the assistant's position from my point of view which may be concealed from your own eye.

Any amount of preaching or teaching at Carr's Lane, or pastoral work of any kind in connection with the church there which you might wish me to undertake, I would try to do earnestly and faithfully. I should esteem it at once a duty of peculiar sacredness and a great delight to relieve you of any work which you may find burdensome, and to carry out under your direction plans which your own endless engagements have prevented you undertaking. This would, I think, occupy my time pretty well: it would be no sinecure allowing of pluralities; but I should of course be glad when at leisure to help a church so intimately connected with Carr's Lane as Lozells, just as I should be ready to give occasional help to Palmer Street, or Bordesley Street; but I should not think it just to that future

position—the prospect of which should regulate present arrangements—to undertake as a matter of duty to preach at any of the three.

I trust that this letter expresses my meaning clearly; and that you will believe that it is written with the utmost respect, affection, and confidence, and prompted by an earnest desire that your plans for the welfare of your church may secure the high ends to which they are directed.

Mr. James's letter in reply was both full and reassuring: it removed all possibility of misunderstanding. Mr. James's intention was, and had been, that he and his assistant should share the work at Carr's Lane and Lozells equally—in short, to avoid the very danger that had excited Dale's apprehension. Mr. James also took occasion to state his plans for the future in more definite terms than he had hitherto employed, having assumed—as men are apt to assume—that what was present to his own mind was known to others also. As he now explained, the experiment of the first year had been intended to determine whether their relationship should proceed further; the second year's probation, as assistant, was to serve a like purpose; should it prove satisfactory to the church and to himself, it was his own wish that at the end of that period Dale should become his colleague in the pastorate. In order to prevent all collision between two co-ordinate powers, Mr. James—following a plan adopted elsewhere—proposed to reserve to himself the right of presiding at church-meetings and at the Communion service. In all other respects the two pastors were to stand on the same footing. This detailed explanation, giving form and substance to a scheme that had hitherto been indefinite, took Dale by surprise. It had not occurred to him that his probation might be so brief, and that he might so soon be called to undertake the larger responsibilities of the pastorate. He was touched to the heart by this mark of confidence, and especially by the overflowing affection expressed in the closing sentences of Mr. James's letter. When he replied, the tide of emotion was still strong.

To Mr. James

31st May 1853.

Your letter has moved me so deeply that I scarcely know how or what to reply. Irrepressible tears express more adequately than words the feelings with which I have read it. If I had written on Saturday with the slightest degree of mistrust, the generous confidence and more than paternal affection of your letter this morning would have filled me with pain and distress: as it is, I am humbled, deeply humbled, with a sense of how unworthy I am to be the object of such regard.

Everything is now explained—I will not say to my satisfaction, for that would imply that I expected all you have proposed; but although I have always felt that an assistantship lasting for more than two or three years would not be so well for the church as a co-pastorate—if it were possible—I did not suppose that you thought of terminating the assistantship so early. Indeed, I shrink from the idea of ever holding an office or bearing a title that would suggest even for a moment any relation between yourself and me but that of paternal superintendence and filial co-operation. Dr. Cox's arrangement solves the difficulty: I should not only be "content" to hold a "second place"; in no other should I feel at perfect ease. . . .

With your confidence and that of the people, I should rejoice to give heart and soul, body and mind, hand and tongue, to God's work in Birmingham. There was a time when, from many things which had been told me about your people, I had small faith in them: it is different now.

I dare not trust myself to refer to the closing paragraph of your letter: I can only look to God and pray Him to forgive me that I am so unworthy of such solicitude, and to answer your prayers on my behalf. And may God enrich your own heart with such grace and peace and power as shall make your earthly life very near to the blessedness of the life to come. I shall not forget your promise to speak to me as frankly as I have ventured to speak to you.

After the vote of the church in July had sanctioned the appointment, it was arranged that Dale should begin his work on the first Sunday in August. On the previous Sunday Mr. James took for his text—"Now, if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do. Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace,

that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren" (1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11). Writing to Dale about the sermon and other matters, he adds: "There is little ground for the fear mentioned in the text, but I have thought it not unreasonable to require for you a warm-hearted, confidential reception." And that a divine blessing might not be wanting, the sermon was followed by an earnest prayer based on the words, "I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. xv. 29). Mr. James's thoughtful consideration did not stop here. He spared himself no pains: he hunted for lodgings; he busied himself with arrangements, omitting no detail, however trivial, that might promote his friend's comfort and happiness.

There is no incident of importance to record in the history of the next few months. Nothing occurred to lessen confidence or to impair affection or harmony; both pastor and people had every reason to rejoice in the result of the experiment. When the following summer came—in June 1854—at a conference of Mr. James and the deacons, all agreed that steps should at once be taken to invite Dale to the co-pastorate. Certain doctrinal clauses in the trust-deed, as to which Dale was not altogether satisfied, led to some discussion; but as the deed could not be altered without long delay—if at all—it was ultimately decided that the election should be conducted in accordance with its provisions, but, so far as possible, without assuming or establishing the clauses to which objection had been taken. The special church-meeting required for the purpose of election was duly convened for 10th July.

The meeting itself profoundly stirred the feeling of the church. Fifty years had passed since it had assembled for such a purpose; out of more than nine hundred members on the church roll, only one survived of those who had met for the last election. And although their beloved pastor was still among them, full of years and of honours, the infirmities of age warned them that the choice they were about to make must vitally affect, for good or

for evil, the future of the church in which their devotion was centred. More than one record has survived of the proceedings; but the account given by Mr. James in a letter to his new colleague is the most vivid and complete.

To Mr. Dale

11th July 1854.

The weather was most unpropitious, as it poured with rain. But the enthusiasm of the church was not to be extinguished by torrents; it was actuated by a love that many waters could not quench. As the choice depended upon numbers, it was arranged that for the more expeditious and facile method of taking them, the brethren should all sit together on the right-hand side of the desk, and for the first time perhaps in the history of the church the two sexes were divided, and appeared in their separate array. It was rather a curious as well as novel, and, on the part of *the* sex, rather a tantalising concern. After my prayer and address, the first business was the counting, to ascertain if the numbers came within the prescription of the deed; for if it did not, the business would have been immediately arrested, and the meeting postponed to collect a larger number. We felt, of course, some little solicitude on this point, but a few minutes relieved us of this; and when it was announced that more than two-thirds of the male members were present, a sense of joy lifted up the whole church, and many turned towards each other with a look and a nod of silent but expressive congratulation. Mr. Phipson, as senior deacon, then read the first and most important resolution, to invite you as co-pastor. His speech was tender, and not too long. He was followed by Mr. Cocks. I then put the resolution. In an instant up flew a little forest of hands and arms, for the brethren were not content with lifting up the former, but, to give emphatic expression to their suffrages, held up their arms, and seemed to me to give their hands a shake, as if to say, "Let that be taken for the lifting up of our hearts, our whole hearts." Then came the call for the negative, if any. I looked round; not a hand was to be seen. I could not refrain the manifestation of deep emotion—"God be thanked—not a hand!"—and after uttering an audible sentence of thanksgiving to God, sat down mastered by my feelings. That God should have so united the hearts of nearly a thousand members—for the women voted with their souls, though they were not allowed to do so with their bodies—in the choice of a pastor, must, I think, be taken as bearing out the "*vox populi, vox Dei.*" Yes, my brother, we cannot interpret it otherwise

than that our choice is God's choice. While thus absorbed in my own feelings, I heard a burst of song spontaneously uttered by the church in the doxology.

The other resolutions were all passed with equal unanimity —not a single negative given to any one of them during the whole evening. Then came the affixing the signatures to the document, and not a man left the place till he had recorded his name as well as given his vote for you.

Never was there such a church-meeting before. It was full to overflowing with holy joy and thanksgiving. After it was over many gathered round me to express their congratulations; and well they might. Oh, how many prayers that meeting answered! how many anxieties it relieved! how many hopes it excited! And now, my dear brother, what say you to this? Does it not cause gratitude and love to our adorable Lord? Does it not fill your heart with thanksgiving and your mouth with praise?

You need not be told that I invite you to be my co-pastor. If you do, I relieve your anxiety by saying, "Come and labour with me in the gospel of Christ. Come and be the evening star of my life. Come and help me amidst that growing weakness which I must soon expect." And may our good Lord bring you in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ!

Although the women members of the Church were debarred from taking part in the vote, they were determined to find some way of giving expression to their feelings; and the formal letter of invitation was followed by a memorial signed by three hundred and seventy of their number.

Dale replied to Mr. James in the following letter:—

To Mr. James

Wallop, near Stockbridge,
Thursday morning.

Your letter, which has just reached me, and dear Mr. Wright's, which found me near Andover on Tuesday evening, have filled my heart with a tumult of thankfulness. The possibility of being in any way connected with the disturbance of the peace of Carr's Lane Church had been hanging over me like a storm-cloud. All the confidence expressed by yourself and other friends had failed to remove my deep conviction that in such a church very many must have been dissatisfied with the services of the past twelvemonth. Had there been a prospect of anything like a

general rejection, though that would have been painful after all the kindness I have received at Carr's Lane, and the affection that I have come to have for the work there, yet there would have been compensation in the relief which it would have given to the less trustful and hopeful side of my nature, which often shrinks from the magnitude and responsibility of the duties which I had begun to be acquainted with. But had there been division and strife, my distress and perplexity would have been, as it seems to me, beyond endurance; and it was this I feared. God be thanked for His almost incredible goodness. He has made the "path straight and plain." Deafness itself cannot mistake His voice. And there is one consideration which gives me special confidence in my conviction that this is of God. At the very time you were gathered at Carr's Lane on Monday evening, I was addressing a meeting on behalf of the Sunday Schools at Andover, and earnestly insisting on the necessity of faithfulness and devoutness on the part of the church there during its destitution of a pastor; maintaining that in the most important decision which a church can make there is infinite peril of mistake, unless by prayerfulness and earnest work there has been the maintaining of very close fellowship with God. The only trustworthy guarantee, as it seems to me, of the soundness of a church's decision in a matter of this kind, is not the wisdom of experience, general soundness of judgment, unanimity of sentiment merely, but a close walking with God. And I do trust that this guarantee sanctions the decision of last Monday. Evidently God has been with the church at Carr's Lane of late: there has been prayer and earnestness within; there have been spiritual conquests without. Even unanimity in a dead church would have left me doubtful. As it is, I feel that there is simply nothing for me to decide; no room for the weighing of conflicting considerations. I have asked God often to make my way clear to me, and now I have only to thank Him for answering that prayer.

The kindness, the generosity of your letter this morning, its overflowing joy and large-hearted confidence, have made my soul too full for utterance. May God make me more worthy of the affection and trust which humble me as much as they rejoice me.

It was on 6th August 1854 that Dale preached for the first time as co-pastor, taking his text from 1 Cor. i. 31, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." In the notes of the sermon, as they have survived, there is no reference to the special circumstances

of the occasion, though the undercurrent of thought is unmistakable.

But immediately before entering upon his new work, he was plunged in what he himself describes as "a sea of anxiety and sorrow." His mother was suddenly taken ill, and he was summoned from Hampshire, arriving just in time to be with her at the last. The very night that his letter of acceptance was read at the church-meeting at Carr's Lane, he and his father and brother were sitting by the dead. The ties that bound him to his mother, as we have seen, were exceptionally strong: her hopes were centred in him; and she had lived long enough to witness the first fulfilment of her dreams. It was natural and inevitable that he should be deeply affected by her loss; but even in the darkest hours the shadow was not supreme. "My mother's deathbed," he wrote a few months later, "was to me a new chapter in the 'Evidences of Christianity': it was the very seal of heaven visibly attached to many a glorious promise and thrilling expression of apostolic confidence. So calm and firm and full a life right up to the end is a blessed thing to look back upon."

He must have been under a severe strain when he came back to work; and it was increased by Mr. James's serious illness, which threw upon him the whole burden of pulpit and pastoral duty. For many weeks Mr. James was entirely prostrate; at one time even his recovery seemed uncertain. When the time for the monthly church-meeting came at the end of August, although Mr. James expressed a wish that his younger colleague should take his place and preside, Dale was anxious that the meeting should be postponed: he felt that it would be singularly ungracious so suddenly to assume all authority —to suggest by act, if not in word, that the church could so easily dispense with the presence and counsel of its venerable pastor; and his opinion prevailed with the diaconate. In September, however, any further adjournment was impossible; and he presided for the first time at the church-meeting held on 27th September.

Among Congregationalists, when a minister first enters

upon the work to which he has given himself, it is customary to mark the occasion by a service of "ordination." The ceremony, however, though usual, is not held to be essential either to the validity of the pastorate or to the efficacy of the sacraments which the pastor administers. Ministerial authority—so they believe—is derived from the calling of the Holy Spirit, and from the invitation of the church that thus chooses a teacher and guide. But they hold no theory of "succession": they do not admit any "transmission" of spiritual gifts. The service confers on the minister no authority that he does not already possess; it endows him with no supernatural powers, with no exceptional sanctity.

Though there is no set form for the rite of ordination, the method of observance varies but slightly. After prayer, the reading of Scripture, and the singing of a hymn, an address is delivered in which the Congregational polity is set forth and vindicated. The church is then asked whether the minister seeking ordination has been selected by its own free choice. "The newly-chosen minister is required to answer in his own words a series of questions, relating to his personal Christian life, his reasons for supposing himself called of God to the ministry, his doctrinal faith, his opinions on ecclesiastical polity, and the manner in which he hopes to fulfil the duties of his office. If these replies are deemed satisfactory, he kneels down in the presence of his church; his ministerial brethren gather round him; one commends him to the Divine keeping, and invokes upon him the richest benediction of Heaven—the baptism of fire, the spirit of wisdom, of power, of holiness and joy: all lay their hands upon his head, and silently join in the invocation."[1] A "Charge" is then delivered to the ordained minister, and either then, or at a separate service, an exhortation is addressed to the people upon the duties which they owe to their minister.

In Dale's case, through Mr. James's illness, the ordination service was deferred till the end of November.

[1] *Life of John Angell James*, p. 85.

Two facts gave exceptional interest to the ceremony: it occurred in the Jubilee year of Mr. James's pastorate; and also after an illness that might have left his younger colleague to occupy his pulpit alone. More than fifty ministers were present, some of them coming from distant parts of the country; and among those who took part in the services were the Rev. John Glanville (Edward Glanville's father), the Rev. Dr. Redford of Worcester, and Professor Barker. The "Charge" was delivered by Mr. James, who took as his text, "We are labourers together with God" (1 Cor. iii. 9); and in the evening the Rev. Samuel Martin, of Westminster Chapel, preached to the Church from Philippians ii. 29, "Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation."

In the proceedings of the day there is much that still retains its interest; but to dwell upon the services in detail is impracticable. Two points, however, may fairly claim attention—Dale's statement of the doctrines which he intended to make the substance of his preaching, and the pathetic passage with which Mr. James ended his address to his new colleague. In replying to the customary questions, Dale showed that he had already surveyed, in thought if not in experience, the field of work that lay before him: his conception of the message that he had to deliver was firm and clear. In almost every sentence one may trace principles and truths which were prominent in his teaching; sometimes even the very phrases occur that were afterwards to become familiar. He began with a confession of faith in Christ and His atoning work. The Christian minister "should proclaim and illustrate the enthronement of Christ as Prince and Saviour, that He may give to men repentance and remission of sins." And it is no narrow deliverance that Christ is ready to confer: it extends through the whole range of existence and touches human life at every point.

It should be his object to impress upon his fellow-believers the largeness of that salvation which, even in this life, they may realise—the need and blessedness of the possession of God's

Spirit, and the certainty of approaching glory. He should seek to increase their sense of entire dependence upon God in Christ for spiritual life and strength, and to deepen their gratitude to God for His great mercy, and to sustain their faith in Him, by keeping constantly before them the important facts that it was not we who chose Him but He who chose us—that we love Him because He first loved us: that right affections, principles, and habits are neither self-originated nor self-sustained, but that all were first produced by the working of the Spirit of Christ, and that all are still sustained by Him; that as our first turning to God's service was the rising up within us of a life begotten there by God's free, unsought grace, according to His eternal purpose, our continuance in that service and ultimate enjoyment of the reward, also depend upon Him, and are therefore defended from the uncertainty to which they would be exposed if they were committed to our own unsustained fidelity. He should, I think, avoid speaking of Christian duties as though they were separate from the ordinary duties of man; and should rather show that as, perhaps, this material world, and the heavens which now bend over us, glorified by the power of God, may become the new heavens and the new earth, wherein righteousness shall dwell,—the common affections, relationships, and duties of life may be so transfigured as to shine with a divine radiance, and so sanctified as to constitute a divine service. He should show, that while the union of God and man in the person of Christ is unique and peculiar, as being a personal union, and not merely a spiritual likeness and fellowship, it is also a proof for all ages that a reconciliation between heaven and earth is possible; it is the beginning of that reconciliation, and the prophecy that some day it will be perfected. He is called Emmanuel, God with us, and that not in a transient manifestation —in forms which prove His presence to be an exceptional and miraculous thing—but by a permanent and inseparable union. In Christ, God has not merely come near to man to reveal His glory or express His will; this He did at Sinai, over the mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies, and in wonderful dreams to Jewish prophets in the days of old. In Christ our whole nature has been penetrated with the divine life, drawn up into the divine glory; an impressive declaration that there is no form of human action or endurance which is to be exempted from God's support and control.

The entire life and nature of man, as well as the entire revelation of God, are to be the subjects of the Christian minister's preaching. His instruction should be what Christ's life was—a showing that God's nature may be revealed in human

circumstances, and man's present life thus made one in spirit, law, and aim, with the life on which are set his everlasting hopes. But while he should insist most earnestly on the necessity of unfolding in the humblest human duties the power of the divinest spiritual affections, he should strive to maintain that high fellowship of the heart with Christ—that habitual and profound recognition of things unseen—without which Christian virtue will be a feeble and worldly thing. In the tumult and heat of this world's business, it is for the Christian minister to make the hearts of his brethren familiar with the calm eternity of God's life, and to make hope and energy aspire to that region of spiritual peace and triumph, so remote from many of us, in which, even on this side of death, the Christian man should dwell.[1]

More impressive must have been the closing appeal of the aged pastor. After setting forth the duties of the ministry, its special perils, its peculiar glory; after dwelling with gratitude on the love and honour bestowed on him by his church, and bespeaking the same loyalty for his young colleague; and having touched upon the difficulties of the relationship into which they had now entered, he ended his address with these words:—

Long after my memorial shall be added to those which are inscribed on yonder marble, may you occupy the pulpit that overshadows my tomb, and send forth over my sleeping dust the words of life and immortality. A long, a holy, and a useful career be yours in this place. As it was in my case, so may it be in yours, and this church be your first, your last, your only love. Even longer, more happy, and more useful may you be here than I have been. Rich in years, in honours, and in usefulness, may you come at some far distant day to your end: and then, after labouring in the same pulpit, come and lie down with me in the same grave, at the foot of it: so shall we resemble warriors resting on the field where they fought and conquered.[2]

How fully his wish was realised—in the spirit if not in the letter—the story of later years will show.

There is one other episode that may also be recorded. Between the morning and evening services, according to

[1] *The Ordination Services of the Rev. R. W. Dale*, pp. 35, 36. London: Hamilton and Adams, 1854.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 65, 66.

custom, the ministers and other visitors were entertained at dinner; and part of the afternoon was given up to speeches of congratulation and goodwill. One of the speakers, not without reason, referred to the peril to which a young man was exposed in being called so early to occupy such a position, and prayed that God might give him all the grace he would surely need. Professor Barker who happened to follow him—always more jealous for the reputation of his students than for his own—quoted in reply a saying of Dr. Collyer, an eminent American divine. When Dr. Collyer was at the height of his popularity, some one said that he wondered how it was possible for him to keep his vessel straight, considering how much sail he carried. "Ah!" replied Dr. Collyer; "you don't know how much ballast I carry too." "I have known Mr. Dale intimately for several years," said Mr. Barker, "and can assure you that he also carries ballast of no small weight."

Any account of Dale's settlement at Birmingham would be incomplete without some reference to his marriage, which followed a few weeks after his ordination. He had been for some time engaged to Miss Elizabeth Dowling—the second daughter of Mr. William Dowling, of Over Wallop, a Hampshire village, lying midway between Salisbury and Andover. One of her brothers, Giles Dowling, had been his fellow-student at Spring Hill; and while at Andover Dale had made several friends in other branches of the family. The marriage was celebrated at Andover on 21st February 1855. It was a wintry day, and the wedding party had to drive for some miles through deep snow; "though, as soon as we were married," he says in a letter written many years later, "the snow began to melt." But the cold, inclement morning proved no omen for the future. From first to last his married life was one of singular happiness, security, and peace.

To say more without offence to due reserve is no easy task; but something must be said—if only by way of outline and suggestion. From his wife Dale received not only sympathy but support. Within the home he was

harassed by no household cares, by no petty anxieties. As time went on, his wife relieved him of other burdens also: she dealt with much of his correspondence, took a considerable share in the activity of the Church, and in many other ways increased his power for pastoral and public service. There are some men in his position who fail to achieve the possibilities and the promise of their earlier years, because in their home-life they have built upon the sand: their strength is impaired even if they do not forfeit happiness. It was Dale's good fortune—and it was one of the secrets of his success—that in this respect also his foundations were all on solid rock.

CHAPTER V

THE CO-PASTORATE

Lecture on the Pilgrim Fathers; controversy provoked by it—Work at Carr's Lane—Mission services in the streets—Sermons on doctrine—A friendly warning—Subjects for the year—Expositions of Romans—Attacks Calvinism—Alarm in the Church—Mr. James intervenes—Dale's distress; letter to Mr. James—Confidence restored—Invitation to Manchester—Mr. James says "stay"—The *Eclectic*—Articles on ministers' stipends, theological training, French politics—Lectures at Spring Hill—Influence as a teacher—Speech for the Patriotic Fund—Competes with the comet—Varied activity—Mr. James's death.

"FEW young men have set sail upon their ministerial voyage with a smoother sea, a fairer wind, or fuller sails." Such was Mr. James's estimate of the position and prospects of his colleague; and it was true enough in the main. But even at the outset there were storms, brief indeed, but sharp and severe while they lasted.

The earliest of these followed closely upon the service of ordination. Early in November 1854 Dale delivered a lecture on "The Pilgrim Fathers," illustrated by Mr. Lucy's well-known picture. The chapel was crowded: the enthusiasm was great. Many Churchmen had come out of curiosity to hear the young minister; and as the lecture was not only historical but also dealt with the principles on which the Congregational polity rests, divergence of opinion found expression at the time. Some, it may be supposed, who were present to hear about the founders of New England—as men that had long since taken their place in history—were surprised at finding that the principles which had led Robinson and Brewster and their companions to cross the Atlantic had

so close a relation to modern controversy. The lecture was not reported in the local papers, but rumour was soon at work. It was asserted that the lecturer had described the Church of England as the church of Antichrist; that he had denied its clergy to be Christians; and had stated that although "he esteemed Mr. Miller—the rector of St. Martin's—and some other clergymen as men, he ignored them as Christian ministers." Such were the tales that were abroad in the town, assuming the most grotesque forms from day to day, as they were handed on by one credulous hearer to another. The wiser course would have been to keep silence, and to reply to no charges that were not publicly made; but Dale—no doubt acting upon advice—had the lecture printed and published, adding a few notes and a postscript. Then the storm broke. The local press reviewed the lecture at length. The controversy was carried into their correspondence columns. At parish meetings many of the clergy denounced the lecturer and his opinions—or rather, the opinions that they imputed to him. Their charges, indeed, were for the most part singularly reckless; and it is not easy to understand how, with the printed lecture before them, some of the speakers could have gone so far astray from the truth. An anonymous pamphlet, too, was issued by way of rejoinder, professing to supplement the lecture by showing how the Puritan settlers dealt with Quakers, Indians, and those suspected of witchcraft, and by illustrating the outcome of Brownist teaching at the time of the Commonwealth. The attack came from all sides and in all forms. Much of the controversy arose out of a reference to the opinions of Robert Browne—the founder of English Independency—who in the reign of Elizabeth had withdrawn from the Established Church, and had gathered several Separatist congregations in Norfolk. He impeached the constitution of the Church, and denied the Queen's supremacy in matters of faith. The principles that Browne asserted were that Christ alone is Head of His Church, and that a Christian Church should consist only of those who have faith in Christ; and Dale in his

lecture said that there was "an immortal life in them which could not be crushed out." He also quoted some of Browne's opinions: "He denied that the Church of England was a true Church—that her clergy were Christian ministers—that her sacraments were valid." As to the Church and its constitution, he was of course at one with Browne; but on the other two points there is not a syllable in the lecture to suggest that he had any sympathy with such views—much less that he shared them. As to the efficacy of the sacraments administered by the clergy of the Establishment, he said nothing. The right of the clergy to recognition as Christian ministers is expressly admitted, both in the text and also in a note.

> It is enough to see the crowds of Christian men who have been rescued from the power of the devil through their ministrations, and who gather round their pulpits every Lord's Day, that they may be taught more perfectly the love of Christ and His holy laws, to be quite satisfied that many of our brethren in the Establishment are "good ministers of Jesus Christ."[1]

Even stronger is the testimony in the lecture.

> God be thanked, we stand in a relation to the Established Church very different from that in which they stood. Instead of being separated from its clergy by persecution and cruelty and contempt on their side, and by distrust and personal antagonism on ours, we are bound to them by a thousand ties of affection, admiration, and confidence. We rejoice to share with them the work of bringing the world to Christ. We look with intense interest upon the endeavours of such clergymen as that noble-hearted man at St. Martin's, to Christianise the working people of this great town. We cheer them on in their work; we triumph in their success. We love, we honour, the devout and earnest clergy of the Establishment. Would to God that their holiness adorned our character, that their zeal burned in our hearts, that we were able to follow more habitually in their footsteps, though afar off.[2]

Either passage, taken alone, should have been sufficient to refute the charges and to dispel the delusion.

The paragraph in the lecture, describing the attitude

[1] *The Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 13. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 30, 31.

of the early Independents towards the Established Church, more readily lent itself to misconception; though its meaning, even without the explanatory notes, ought to have been clear to any one acquainted with the history and principles of Nonconformity.

They thought that a true Church was "a congregation of faithful men," not an institution including the godly and the godless, and stretching over an entire nation. They thought that when a church was gathered, those who wished to enter it, should promise to live and worship according to the laws of Christ; that the admission and exclusion of members, and the appointment of church-officers should be the work of all the members of the church, in church-meeting assembled. They thought that one church ought not to exercise any authority over other churches; and that the power of a pastor should be limited to the church which had chosen him. They did not like prescribed forms of prayer. They did like lay-preaching; though they believed in the importance of a regular ministry. They thought that the civil magistrate ought not to be employed to execute church censures.

They disapproved, therefore, of the constitution of the Church of England, of its bishops, and of the government exercised over it by the Queen and Parliament. They judged it by its own Articles, which declare that "a Church is a congregation of faithful men," as well as by the New Testament, and denied it to be a true Church at all, though there were many excellent Christian persons in it; and to that denial I firmly hold.[1]

The last clause, as Dale acknowledged in the post-script, has "an abruptness and vehemence" which might easily wound the feelings of some who heard him; and he regretted that he had expressed himself in such a way as to give offence. But to the substance of the statement he held firmly. Were his conviction otherwise, he could not have honestly remained a member of an Independent church; for the roots of Independency are in the spiritual not in the political domain. At his own ordination services—he reminds those who found fault with this declaration—in replying to the question, Why do you dissent from the Church of England? he had answered:—

[1] *The Pilgrim Fathers*, pp. 12, 13.

I dissent from the Church of England because I believe that the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men; but a National Church cannot be a congregation, nor can there be any adequate security for all its members being faithful. While, therefore, I rejoice to honour the Christian nobleness of many of the ministers and private members of the Establishment, and to recognise within its limits many communities of Christian people, which, though unnamed, unorganised, and without any ecclesiastical separation from the godless people around them, are virtually Christian Churches, since they are congregations of Christian men who regularly meet for worship and Christian communion, I cannot admit that the heterogeneous mass of godly and godless people who equally belong to the National Establishment constitute a Christian Church.[1]

Again in the postscript he restates the principle:—

The depth and energy of my faith in the cardinal principle of Congregationalism, that a Church is a society of Christian men, bound together by faith in Christ, and love to each other, and having for its object spiritual fellowship and the maintenance of God's worship and ordinances, are the measure of my anxiety so to represent the principle as to command for it the respect, the confidence, the attachment of Christian people. The withholding of the title of Church, in the apostolic and Christian sense of the word, from every society which makes no adequate security for its members being spiritual, which practically admits the believer and the unbeliever to the same ecclesiastical privileges, is a necessary and obvious application of that principle.[2]

As he distinguished between the ministry and the church—acknowledging that a minister might be a true minister of Christ although not a minister of "a true Church," so also he distinguished between the church and its members. The church might not be "a true Church" according to his interpretation of the thought and will of Christ; but as its ministers might be Christian ministers, so among its members many might be true Christians: it was the constitution of the church that was at fault. The distinction is one with which Episcopalians in our time are familiar. Consistently with their principles, they

[1] *Ordination Services of the Rev. R. W. Dale*, p. 33.
[2] *The Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 36.

refuse the title "Church" both to Independent congregations and to the organised societies of Presbyterianism and Methodism. Many of them, if not all, would also deny that the pastors of those communions are in the strict sense Christian "ministers." But very few would hesitate to acknowledge that these pastors, whether ministers or not, are Christian men, and that they are doing Christ's work; fewer still would deny that these communities, whether "churches" or not, include very many Christian people.

Such a controversy was an unfortunate introduction to the town at large. It set Dale in a false light, and left a false impression of his character. Those who formed their opinions by report, even if they believed only half of what they heard, were led to regard him as a violent and contentious partisan who found his natural element in strife. It was well for himself and for his peace of mind that when the ferment was fiercest, he was away on his wedding journey, visiting Oxford and Cambridge, and other towns of historic interest—for the wintry weather made the sea desolate and mountains inhospitable. Had he been in Birmingham, he would have found it difficult to keep out of the fray and to avoid renewing occasion of offence. With no fresh fuel to feed the flame, the blaze soon subsided. Other incidents held the public mind, and the dispute was forgotten. In the course of a few months the commemoration of Mr. James's Jubilee, in which all the Churches of the town took part, helped to restore peace.

Dale himself soon had his thoughts filled with other things. When he returned from his honeymoon, and had settled down for the first time in a home of his own, and had finished his furnishing—"the queerest thing possible," so he confessed to a friend; when all this was over, and life began to set steadily along its new channels, he found himself at once immersed in active work; and though the duties of the pastorate were shared with his colleague, for some time he found ample scope for all his energies without venturing beyond his own domain. As a rule, he

Aged 25.

had to preach once only on the Sunday, taking the morning and the evening services alternately, and to give an address at the week-night meeting twice in the month; only when Mr. James was absent through illness or any other cause had he to sustain the whole burden of the pastorate. But the various activities of a great congregation made large demands upon his strength. He conducted a Bible Class, for which careful preparation was required. He regularly attended the meetings of the "Brotherly Society," which sought to develop the intellectual and social life of its members. He led their discussions, and during the year he gave them two lectures dealing with Christianity on its historical side—one on "The earliest uninspired Christian Writings," the other on "Marcion, the Heretic." He also had to take his share of the marriages and the funerals, in the oversight of the schools connected with the church, and in the visitation of the sick and the sorrowing. Nor was this all. It is evident that he rendered substantial aid to the Village Preachers' Association established for the evangelisation of the country districts. Week after week their meetings appear in his diary of engagements, and he was not content merely to help the evangelists to prepare for their work; he shared it with them.

He had not been able to shape his course according to his dreams, and to give himself to mission work among the poor; but in earlier as in later years he lost no opportunity of appealing to those who stand outside all churches and are almost wholly untouched by religious organisations. In a letter written during the summer of 1855 he describes a united effort made by the ministers of the town to reach this class of people.

To Mr. C. Jones

13th July 1855.

We are just in the midst of a glorious week in Birmingham. The Baptist and Independent ministers have united for open-air services. We began on Monday, and have had increasing

congregations every night. On Monday we had quite 1500; last night, I should think, more than 2000. I have been at it every night this week, and enjoy it amazingly. We intend to go from place to place in the town, giving a whole week (four nights) to each spot we choose. We are at Smithfield this week; next week we go to Vauxhall. The congregations have been mainly composed of men; and from their appearance I should think that a very large proportion never attend a place of worship. Their quietness and earnest attention are very remarkable and encouraging.

The work attracted attention in the town, and the accounts published in the local papers show that it was then regarded as a new and strange experiment. One correspondent vividly describes the scene in Smithfield—the rough crowd, massed round a cabinetmaker's cart which served the speakers as a platform; the earnestness, the silence, and the awe. For the young minister it must have meant much so to escape from the study to the street, and from the familiar flock to the unshepherded multitude.

Evangelistic work among the ignorant and the unbelieving is, however, only one of the functions of the ministry; and though Dale would gladly have spent his whole strength in such activities had he been only a missionary and not a pastor as well, he recognised from the very first that systematic instruction in religious truth is essential to the spiritual vigour of a Christian church, and that in many cases spiritual ardour is enfeebled and depressed through an imperfect apprehension of the primary truths of the gospel. It was his conviction also that a congregation of ordinary intelligence would not be repelled by discourses on doctrine, and that the more active minds among its members would actually welcome the discussion of the loftier problems of life and faith. More than once he took occasion to insist that religion has its rights over the head as well as the heart, and that Christ claims the service of the intellect and the emotions alike. He laid stress upon the duty of strenuous thought about the greatest subjects, and also upon the necessity of it for the full development of the Christian character.

A single passage from one of these early sermons will be sufficient to indicate his standpoint.

> In these days when it is a universal lamentation that many of our most vigorous minds are quite uncontrolled and even uninterested by Christian teaching, and when the increasing disregard of the peculiar doctrines of the New Testament is perpetually acknowledged and loudly deplored, it cannot be the duty of the Christian minister to drive away from the church all the thoughtful people that are left, by adopting a style of preaching that calls for no intellectual activity, or to confirm and sanction the general depreciation of the importance of Christian doctrines, by avoiding the discussions through which alone these doctrines can be established. As a Christian congregation it should be our ambition to be as much distinguished for breadth and depth of religious knowledge as for fervour of devotion, freedom of generosity, and nobleness of moral character; and there is a more intimate connection than some of us, perhaps, are inclined to believe, between spiritual truth in the intellect and spiritual life in the heart. I think that God could hardly confer upon this country a greater blessing than by reawakening that intense interest in religious doctrine which distinguished the heroic men who belonged to the times of the Commonwealth.

Such an appeal cannot have been altogether unnecessary; though the sermons excited very genuine interest, especially among the younger members of the congregation. But even if the people had shown themselves unwilling to listen to sermons on such subjects, the young minister, it is clear, would have held on his course: he was resolved to give his congregation not what they liked but what they needed. An incident, which he related many years afterwards, reveals the spirit in which he came to his work. One day, soon after he was settled in the pastorate, he met in the streets of Birmingham a Congregational minister—a Welshman and a preacher of remarkable power. "He had reached middle age, and I was still a young man, and he talked to me in a friendly way about my ministry. He said: 'I hear that you are preaching doctrinal sermons to the congregation at Carr's Lane; they will not stand it.' I answered: 'They will

have to stand it.'"[1] There may have been some of "the insolent self-confidence of youth" in both the temper and the form of his reply; but his conception of the ministry —so it seemed to him after an experience of nearly forty years—was in the main a just one; and he set himself to fulfil it.

To ensure a certain measure of fulness and completeness in his presentation of truth, and to avoid the danger of failing to give to any of the great doctrines of the Christian faith an adequate place in his preaching, it was his habit to draw up in December or January a list of some of the subjects on which he wished to preach during the following twelve months. The lists varied from time to time: there are some distinct differences between the lists of earlier and those of later years. But some subjects remain constant: Regeneration, Justification, Sanctification, the Personality of the Holy Spirit, the Divinity of Jesus Christ, Judgment to Come, and Faith, appear in plans for two years widely separated in time. The earlier list also includes Judgment by Works, the Inspiration of the New Testament, Infant Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; the later list the Incarnation, the Trinity, Sin, and the Atonement. In addition to these doctrinal subjects, some great Christian duties are included in the plans, such as Truthfulness, Kindness, Industry, Courage, Justice, and Contentment. This method ensured that the choice of subjects should not be left altogether to accident or impulse. Dates and other marks attached to the lists show at a glance how far he carried out his scheme. Few subjects were passed over; and where this happened, he took care to make good the omission in the following year.

He had already begun to take connected portions and even books of Scripture for continuous exposition, dealing with fundamental principles or with processes of argument rather than with isolated texts. A course of sermons on the Epistle to the Romans involved him in serious trouble. At first, anxiety was excited by phrases

[1] *Christian Doctrine*, Preface, p. v.

and expressions rather than by definite statements of doctrine, and it was not till he reached the middle of the second chapter that any real apprehension made itself felt. Most, if not all, of those to whom he spoke had been brought up to assume that the heathen nations were necessarily and irretrievably lost—that those who had never heard of Christ and His gospel, and those who had deliberately rejected Him, were destined alike to an eternity of suffering. Even if the dogma had lost its hold upon thought and imagination, it still kept its place in their creed; though when assailed, it was defended without passion or fervour. This, Dale argued, was not Paul's teaching. The Apostle declared that "patient continuance in well-doing" was possible to the Gentile as well as to the Jew; that the Gentiles were not altogether without law, as shown by their obedience to the law "written in their hearts." And for his own part, he believed that the promises of ultimate deliverance—promises made before the law was given—might include all who turned to God; that the heathen might find the unseen Power that they had sought; and that the death of Christ might redeem even those who never knew Him. He rejected as horrible and incredible the vision of—

> Ten thousand sages, lost in endless woe,
> For ignorance of what they could not know.

This declaration, had it stood alone, would have made no stir. Some of the older members of the church were nervous, foreboding trouble still to come; others complained that such teaching "would weaken the missionary society." But as yet there was no general alarm. Before long, however, a storm began to gather. When he reached the third chapter of the epistle, he proceeded to discuss the doctrine of Justification. While holding fast to the fact of the Atonement, he discarded the theory and the phraseology to which many Nonconformists of the Evangelical school still clung. The penalty of sin had been regarded as a "debt" due from man to God. Such a debt no human power could discharge, and Eternal Justice was bound to

exact it to the last penny. Christ, in His infinite compassion, became man, suffered in our stead, and in His own Person "paid the debt" upon the cross, bringing pardon and reconciliation within our reach. The God against whom we had sinned was bound to forgive us because Christ had died. Such a conception of the Atonement, and a metaphor so certain to mislead, Dale repudiated.

It is to the free mercy of God that we have to appeal for justification. Not only so far as we are concerned is justification a free gift; even the Atonement of Jesus Christ does not make it any the less an act of free grace. To insist upon the analogy between the punishment our sin deserved and a debt, and to maintain that when Christ suffered He so paid the debt that even in justice God is obliged to forgive us, is to misrepresent the whole transaction. There would be no forgiveness in the case at all then. If my debt to you is paid by another, you do not forgive the debt but exact it—though from another. You show me no favour. You are not merciful but just. There is no free gift—no grace in the matter at all, but law and only law.

As the exposition advanced, excitement rapidly grew. Excitement deepened into alarm, and alarm rose to the height of a panic. Two discourses on the latter half of the fifth chapter marked the culminating point. The congregation was like one great Bible Class: there was a Bible open in almost every hand. Wave upon wave of emotion rolled through the congregation as the preacher developed his theme. For now it was not a metaphor or a phrase that was exposed to assault, but an article of faith, firmly rooted in the minds of those who had grown up under the influence of Calvinism—the doctrine of Original Sin and Natural Depravity as commonly held at that time.

Throughout the sermon there was much to provoke hostile criticism, but two passages stood out above the rest and drew the lightning. In expounding the words, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (v. 19), Dale ran directly counter to the accepted method

of interpretation. He argued then, as he argued later, that in this verse, and in the context, Paul alludes to the transgression of Adam and its results, not for the sake of giving an explanation of human sin, but for the sake of illustrating the greatness of the Christian salvation. The Apostle believed that the sin of Adam had brought vast evils on our race, as the righteousness of Christ had brought infinite blessings. By Adam's sin we have been morally degraded, as by Christ's righteousness we have been morally recovered. The fact of our degradation is accepted as incontestable: the theories propounded to interpret the fact are rejected.

How we have been made sinners by Adam's sin, the Apostle does not tell us; there was no need for him to enter into that question at all. That he means we have been made actual wrongdoers by Adam, and not merely wrongdoers by imputation, I hold to be certain. The necessities of the argument require it, and I can nowhere find in the Scriptures anything to favour the idea that the meaning of our being made sinners is that we are simply reckoned to have committed Adam's sin. Personally, I repeat, we sin; and Adam's sin is in some sense the origin of this. I do not believe indeed that there is anything which can be rightly spoken of as "infused" into our nature at birth, which is the direct and immediate source of all our wrongdoing. When I am told that an infant has even at birth a disposition towards evil—a disposition derived from Adam—I shrink from the doctrine, not so much because I disbelieve it, as because I find it altogether unintelligible. I cannot understand what is meant by a wrong disposition existing in a nature which as yet is not capable either of right or wrong. Before moral activity begins, there can be no moral character; and where there is no moral character there can surely be no moral dispositions. I cannot understand, I repeat, what is meant by an infant having an evil heart—a wicked nature—when it cannot distinguish between its right hand and its left, when all moral distinctions are absolutely unknown. It cannot believe either falsehood or truth, when it is incapable of believing anything; and it cannot have either sinful dispositions or good dispositions, when it is incapable both of sin and of goodness.

This was not all. After tracing in detail the tremendous inferiority of our moral position to that of Adam—

an inferiority resulting from his transgression—he proceeds to denounce the Calvinistic creed with passionate vehemence.

Show me a single passage in the Old Testament or the New which teaches that in addition to all this, Adam has transmitted to us a nature having moral evil in it from our very birth, and I bow at once. But after the most patient and honest endeavours to find such a passage, after diligent reading of what has been written by those who believe in the doctrine which I deny, I can see no authority for it either in the Bible on the one hand or in philosophy on the other. And it should be remembered that this doctrine that evil is infused into the heart of an infant at its birth, so that it has a sinful nature before it has committed sin, has always depended rather upon a particular system of philosophy, which is fast passing away, than upon the teaching of the Word of God. Some of those who still use the language of Calvin about a hereditary tendency to evil, really hold the doctrine which I have been trying to expound this morning, and mean nothing more than the absence of holy dispositions, and the absence of the influences of the Holy Spirit. With such I have no real controversy. I think their language loose, inaccurate, and likely to lead those who hear it into most mischievous error. But when I read—as I do read in the writings of men of high reputation and great authority—that the natural depravity which is in infants makes them deserve God's vengeance; and when I further read that only the infants of the godly are grafted into Christ, and that the rest are left to the common lot, —when I see these doctrines put forth as the doctrines of the New Testament, taught in the name of the Apostle Paul, I know not how to repress my indignation; there are no words strong enough to express my abhorrence, loathing, and disgust.

This brought matters to a crisis. The church was disturbed and divided: feeling began to run high. Anxiety and alarm were not confined to Carr's Lane. The sermons were gravely discussed at Board meetings of Spring Hill College, and among the friends of the college elsewhere. One old fellow-student, not distinguished by his sense of humour, said to Dale: "I wish that Paul had never written that chapter: it has greatly disturbed your position at Carr's Lane." Within the church and congregation, part —perhaps the larger part—took sides with the young minister: but these were for the most part young them-

selves, and the men of age and experience, who could look back on long years of faithful service, were generally hostile; and although the balance of opinion was undecided, dissatisfaction was far too strong to have been suppressed by the vote of a majority, had appeal been made to the decision of the church.

Dale himself was deeply distressed. He would have made almost any sacrifice for the sake of peace. He had not been in haste to set forth his own opinions; but when the occasion came for plain speaking, he had felt bound in duty to his church, his colleague, and to truth itself, to make his own convictions clear: silence or evasion would have been criminal. But he would make no ignoble concession to disarm antagonism. The sermons on doctrine were delivered in the morning, and to a congregation of whom very many were not present at night. A friend, in discussing the state of affairs, suggested that he should change his usual method, and should preach in the morning such a sermon as he was accustomed to preach at night. "If, now," she said, "you were to preach such a gospel sermon as you gave us in the evening a fortnight ago, it would at once be seen that the charge of unorthodoxy is baseless." "That would be preaching Christ for my own ends," he at once replied; "I could not do that." And to this decision he firmly held.

In this crisis, Mr. James showed exceptional courage and generosity. He was not so sound a Calvinist as he supposed himself to be; but he was by no means in agreement with the opinions expressed by his colleague. At the same time, he was satisfied in his own mind that the theological differences between them did not touch "the substance or core of Evangelical truth"; and he was resolved that the settlement arrived at after so much thought and prayer should not be lightly annulled. Any public appeal, he felt, would be injudicious and ineffective; so he went to one after another of those whom he knew to be disquieted, and exerted all his influence and authority to calm their fears and to remove their suspicions. Some of the phrases that he used are still remembered. Like

Samuel Johnson, he had two distinct styles of speech. In the pulpit, or on the platform, his utterance was clothed with dignity and pomp; in private life, he spoke with a directness, a force, and a rough vigour that went straight home. He did not beat about the bush; he did not appeal to abstract principles. "Now you leave the young man alone," he said. "He has the root of the matter in him. The young man must have his fling." An appeal of that kind all could understand. They understood, and they obeyed. The tumult ceased, and the trouble slowly died away. Not till after Mr. James's death did Dale learn how he had been shielded and upheld.

It was a painful experience, but not without its compensations. It taught him to give as he had received, to help others in after years as he had himself been helped. More than one young minister, similarly beset, has blessed the strong arm outstretched in his defence; more than one church, after the peril was over, has been grateful for the clear, firm guidance that kept it from disruption. Nor was this the whole of the lesson. He learned, as he could have learned in no other way, when dealing with the theological problems by which men are divided, to distinguish between those who deny the great central facts of the gospel and those who accept the facts but reject the theories by which the facts are interpreted, —to distinguish, in short, between unity of form or expression and unity of substance.

Trouble of such a kind, however, leaves its effects long after the original cause of misunderstanding is removed. Suspicion survives, and estrangement. The sympathy, the confidence, the affection, so essential to the right relations of pastor and people, are lost or impaired; and these only the healing influence of time can restore. So as months went by, Dale began to feel more and more acutely that he was not in his right place at Carr's Lane. The meagre success of his work—so far as he could measure it—filled him with deepening despondency; and the hostility which he was now conscious of having pro-

voked, led to bitter self-reproach. The following letter, addressed to Mr. James—undated, but evidently written early in the autumn of 1856—expresses the dissatisfaction with which he reviewed the past and his hopelessness of future usefulness in Birmingham.

To Mr. James

London, *September* (?) 1856.

I have been trying several times during the past six months to speak to you about anxieties which I cannot repress, and which I feel ought not to be concealed from you; when I asked you to be kind enough to call round before the last church meeting, I hoped to be able to gather courage, but failed. For the last year and a half I have had a growing conviction, which has only left me occasionally to return very soon in greater strength than ever, that I am utterly useless at Carr's Lane, and am standing in the way of somebody else who would do the work far better. I can honestly say that I have tried hard, looking to God for help, to preach the very central truths of the gospel, and so to preach them as to reach the hearts of the ungodly. You know how wretched have been the results. Nor do I feel that what you have again and again alleged for my comfort avails very much. How can I tell but that there is something in the relation of the people towards myself which hinders your usefulness as well as my own? The fact is that I made mistakes at first which I fear are irreparable. I did not strive as I should have done to win the confidence of the people, and I am sure that I do not possess it. I determined to preach exactly what I thought was true—and therein indeed was right; but I should have endeavoured so to preach it as to conciliate prejudices instead of strengthening them; and this I forgot to do. Whether I can ever do it I am not sure; for it is very hard entirely to reconstruct habits of thought and speech; and I am only too painfully conscious of a certain dash of bitterness and edge of sarcasm which occur too frequently in my preaching, and of a tendency to exaggerate any differences which exist between my modes of viewing truth and those to which the people have been for the most part accustomed. The consequence is that the electric currents of spiritual sympathy which ought to stream between preacher and hearer, pastor and people, are absent. Nothing but the generous confidence and fatherly patience which you have exhibited towards me, and the fear that any indications of a disposition on my

part to move might imply that I was insensible to your kindness and ungrateful for it, have prevented me listening to one or two proposals which during the last year have been privately made to me. I could not endure the thought of appearing to forsake you just when the congregation at Carr's Lane was passing through a season of trial; I could not endure the thought of bringing new anxieties about you, and have therefore stood my ground. But, my dear friend, are you sure that my staying is for the good of the church, and for your own real happiness? The way would be much easier for a successor than it has been for me, and he might profit from my errors. Perhaps God's object in bringing me to Carr's Lane was that I might make it more ready to receive one who should be better qualified to work with you than myself.

The dissatisfaction which every now and then reveals itself to me, is not likely to be exhibited before your eyes; so that I fear you are hardly in a position to judge of its extent and seriousness. But that a very large proportion of the people come to hear me, rather with curiosity as to what I shall say, than with the expectation and desire of being spiritually helped, I am tolerably certain. I cannot see my way; thick darkness seems all round. People whom I meet here are incessantly congratulating me on the good tidings which they say they hear about me, and my heart often aches while I listen. I have written this, rather because I feel that you should know these feelings and thoughts, than because they have led me as yet to any clear and definite result.

Mr. James's answer has not been preserved; but in this instance, as in others, it evidently succeeded in relieving Dale's doubts and difficulties for the moment, if it did not dispose of them altogether.

The next twelve months seem to have been entirely free from trouble of any kind, and the attachment of the people to their younger minister grew rapidly. Many of those who at first had regarded him with suspicion, found their distrust dissolve as they came to know him. One good man with a keen scent for heresy, whose hostility had been conspicuous, at a week-night prayer meeting startled those present by the tenderness and fervour of his intercession for the pastor who was crossing the Irish Channel that evening. "Say to the winds and the waves this night concerning him," he prayed, "Touch not my

anointed, and do my prophet no harm." Some indeed were still dissatisfied; but the ill-feeling for the most part was veiled. Dale himself could not but be conscious of the change: he felt that his hold upon the church was becoming stronger in every way. But the earlier experiences could not be soon forgotten: the wound had healed; but the scars remained. And he was still uncertain whether he was in his right place, or doing the work for which he was best qualified. His reputation as a preacher was spreading. A diary of engagements for the year 1856 shows that his services were now sought even in remote parts of the country. Most of his work still lay in the Midland towns within easy reach of Birmingham, and in the neighbouring villages; but he preached also at Taunton, Bristol, Banbury, Newcastle, Ashton-under-Lyne, at Manchester, Sheffield, and Limerick.

In Manchester his power and his promise were at once recognised; and when, a few months later, the church at Cavendish Street was in search of a pastor, Dale, among others, was invited to preach. His sermon made such an impression that he was asked to come again, it being understood that an invitation to the pastorate was contemplated. He agreed to go; but in doing so he thought it only right and proper that Mr. James and the deacons of Carr's Lane should be informed of what was in progress: to enter into, or even to encourage, any negotiations behind their backs, appeared to him not only discourteous but disloyal. They were much concerned; and when an invitation from Cavendish Street, unanimous and urgent, followed, their distress increased. The position in itself had strong attractions. The church had noble traditions: it had been, and might again become, a great centre of spiritual force. It was reported that the stipend proposed was exceptionally munificent—far in excess of any amount that Carr's Lane, notwithstanding the generosity of the senior pastor, could possibly offer.[1]

[1] Through Mr. James's own request, and by his own act, the sum devoted by the church to the support of its ministers was divided equally between us when the co-pastorate began; and . . . gradually his own pastoral income was

Mr. James was seriously alarmed, as may be seen in the following letter:—

FROM MR. JAMES

I believe you to be as free from selfish and mercenary considerations and motives as any man living; yet I feel it requires such an act of self-denying disinterestedness to resist such a tempting offer that it is difficult for us to expect it, unless you are entirely convinced that the balance of usefulness preponderates for Birmingham. I believe it does,—that is, if we take into account the low state of our denomination, and the present situation of the college, to which, with all its deficiencies, you owe something.

The people also were dismayed by the possibility of separation. The church met, and, with only one dissentient voice, expressed their confidence and affection in a strongly-worded resolution. More than eighty young men of the congregation signed a memorial, acknowledging the spiritual help that they had received from Dale's ministry, and urging him to remain among them. And scrupulously careful as Mr. James showed himself not to exert any undue pressure, and not to force a favourable decision, the intense concern that could not be concealed, even by silence, pleaded with a pathetic power.

The first of the following letters was addressed to Mr. James from Wasperton, where, in quiet and seclusion, the question at issue could be calmly and fully thought out.

TO MR. JAMES

WASPERTON HILL, *24th December* 1857.

The kind and generous note which I received from you this morning has only given additional strength to the personal ties, already sufficiently strong, which bind me to Carr's Lane. It is, however, a great satisfaction to me to be able to say that my mind is happily entirely free from the pernicious influence of pecuniary considerations. If indeed such an offer as you have

diminished, and that of his colleague increased, until at his death the elder minister received from the church less than one-half the amount that was received by the younger (*Life of John Angell James*, p. 475).

heard of had really been made me, I think it would have been rather to the prejudice of the interests of Cavendish Street; I should have thought of it as indicating a secret and dishonourable suspicion that my choice might be ruled by very inferior motives, and that in the judgment of the church at Manchester what was deemed a "gift of God" might be "bought with money." I should have feared to accept what would have looked very like a bribe to go, lest the injury likely to be inflicted both upon Carr's Lane and the town of Birmingham generally by the interpretation which would infallibly have been put upon my conduct, would outweigh whatever increase of usefulness Manchester might appear to promise. But the fact is that no such offer, nor anything like it, has really been made. . . .[1] The difference between their offer and my present income is too inconsiderable to have the slightest influence in determining my choice. I need not say that other private considerations are strongly on the side of Birmingham. You would not be pleased if I told you how much influence my remembrance of all that you have been to me, and still are, exerts on all my meditations. In the congregation as well as in the church there are many, very many, from whom it would be a most bitter thing for me to part. I love and reverence numbers of the Christian brethren with whom and for whom I have been labouring, more, I am sure, than they imagine. The mode of life, too, in Birmingham is much more in harmony with my own personal tastes and habits than the mode of life in Manchester. But after the most devout and thorough consideration I am still unable, firmly and with entire satisfaction to my judgment and my conscience, to determine what I ought to do; or rather, whether I ought to go or remain.

I have come to this. In your personal judgment I can implicitly rely: I believe that you are as uninfluenced by private motives in this grave matter as though your interest in it were only that of any other Christian man, anxious for the promotion of Christ's glory and the most efficient employment of the special and characteristic faculties belonging to myself as one of His servants.

Read this letter, and if it is your own conviction that I can serve our common Master most efficiently by remaining here, then with a glad and bounding heart I will meet the church on Friday and reconsecrate myself — not reluctantly and half-heartedly, but with joy and the full consent of my whole nature, to their service. If you shrink from determining the matter,

[1] A few sentences relating to the financial details of the Manchester proposal have been omitted.

then—though this would be a less satisfactory tribunal to my own mind, since you must know Carr's Lane better than they can—let Mr. Redford, Mr. Greenfield, and Mr. Wilson of Wolverhampton have the whole subject put before them; immediately, and with thorough cordiality, I will accept their decision. I have named these three, because I really do not know how they look on the matter.

Let me place before you the reasons for remaining, and those on the other side, as they have occurred to me, excluding—as I am writing to you—the very strong considerations derived from the happy and cordial harmony which has existed between us and the extent of obligation under which I am conscious that I lie to your generosity, self-sacrifice, and trustfulness. I will only say, that I cannot and will not leave you, except your judgment, or the judgment of those on whom you can rely, declares that for Christ's sake I ought to go. If I separate my present connection with Carr's Lane, it must be not only with your concurrence, but in harmony with your convictions of what will be best for the church you love so well, and for the universal Church which you love still better. There are, I clearly see, strong reasons for remaining in Birmingham.

(1) The present church and congregation are on the whole, I believe, more than satisfied with my ministry. Many are personally attached to me, and believe that they derive strength and instruction from my ministry. This is specially true, I imagine, of the class most essential to the future prosperity of the church—the young people. On the other hand: but twelve or fifteen months ago, there was very considerable dissatisfaction on the part of many of the wisest, strongest, and best people in the church, occasioned by my preaching doctrines which I still hold, and by the influence on my ministry of mental and moral habits too deeply rooted ever to be wholly destroyed. It has happened, of late, that my morning sermons have been almost entirely historical; and these historical sermons have excited an interest which I did not expect, greatly as it has encouraged me. But nearly all this time the kind of preaching which I most approve, which is most natural to me, for which I am conscious I have the greatest adaptation and to which I must, if I remain, in some measure, return, has been, partly by intention, partly by accident, avoided: I feel indeed that this style must be abandoned to a great extent if I remain. If it is my duty to work at Carr's Lane, it is my duty to work in the way that Carr's Lane requires; whether I shall be permanently successful in doing this, I cannot tell, but I can pledge myself without any reservation or difficulty to do my best. It does appear to my

own judgment, however, that the comparatively recent dissatisfaction and the circumstances which account for its disappearance, should diminish to some extent the great weight to be attached to the unequivocal demonstrations which have lately been given of present confidence in my ministry and attachment to it.

(2) Independency in Birmingham is so inadequately represented that to imperil the church which stands almost alone in its strength and influence, would be a grave evil: this I feel most deeply. It has, however, been again and again suggested to me—and that not simply by people at Cavendish Street—that Manchester, notwithstanding its numerous churches and ministers, is lamentably deficient in the sort of ministry which would attract the educated young men of the city, on whose future piety so much of the welfare of the whole country depends. It is thought that my preaching would command their sympathies and, with God's blessing, secure their attachment to Nonconformity, and—what is of infinitely greater importance—to Christ. I hear of men once connected with Christian congregations in Manchester who go nowhere, because nowhere do they find what lays hold of their judgment and their hearts. If Cavendish Street could be filled so as to reach these, the benefit would be incalculable; and it is affirmed that it would be easier to secure a man who would work Carr's Lane as efficiently as myself, or more efficiently, than to secure a man who would work Cavendish Street as well.

(3) The college has strong claims on my best services. The force of this I feel as much as any man can. Necessarily I must feel more concerned for it than any one else who could occupy my present position; and though it is now tolerably certain, I suppose, that the Theological Chair will be filled by a man who will render very efficient aid in all ways, it would be a grief to me to be obliged to leave the college just now. She is not among breakers, I think; but she requires all the strength that can be gathered round her.

(4) I am at Carr's Lane, and only grave reasons should induce me to leave. Not a bare preponderance of usefulness even, but a considerable one is necessary to justify removal. I am anxious again to place before you briefly and clearly what the reasons are against remaining, which from the beginning have had weight with me.

The present congregation cannot — ought not — to be occupying the place ten or fifteen years hence. Should I remain, it will be one of my most prominent objects to secure the building of a second church in the suburbs, probably at Highgate: I am quite clear about the duty of doing this. Carr's

Lane has for its mission the conversion and right training of the masses of the Birmingham people. Its size, its position, alike indicate this. When I came to you, the vision floated before my mind of a powerful working-class church filling the lower part of the chapel month after month to celebrate the Supper of the Lord. I burned to be the means of realising that vision: it seemed to me the grandest thing to be done on the earth. Sadly, but slowly, I have come to the conviction that I cannot do it. My preaching must always be to a large extent speculative and doctrinal. To reconstruct one's mind and completely transform one's habits is a hard, almost an impossible task. Such men as Mr. Beaumont—whose head appears to me to be one of the finest I ever met with—complained that it was hard work to follow my sermons on "Romans." Wherever I go, I must strive against the excessive tendency to abstractions by which my preaching must have been characterised for such a man to speak so of it; but do, my dear sir, ask whether it is for the true interests of Carr's Lane to have preaching which must, however hard I try to remould it, be always characterised by this element. I may be as successful in expelling it and adopting another style as some men are in speaking a foreign language; but it will be an acquired and not a natural thing. I have tried to place myself during the time I have been here under the very Cross of Christ; to anticipate the final account which will have to be given of my ministry; to hear what Christ Himself would say were He here; to cherish all the thoughts and principles which ought to influence the decision of this question: and I have come to the conclusion which this letter indicates—that the whole subject is one on which others can judge better than I. Your judgment, my dear sir, would be the most satisfactory by far, whichever way it went. Next to yours—but a long way behind—I could accept the decision of the brethren I have named. I leave the whole matter, therefore, in your hands. My private and personal predilections are in favour of remaining; I am in doubt, however, whether I ought not to go: the "ought" your own decision would completely determine. . . .

At first Mr. James shrank from taking upon himself so serious a responsibility. He knew that any decision to which he might come would be loyally accepted at the moment; but he feared lest it should be regretted afterwards. His own mind, however, was clear. His verdict was for Birmingham and against Manchester. He said "stay"—and said it without hesitation. But he was

willing, if his colleague so desired, to call in others to advise. This was not done: his judgment was accepted as final, and the decision was communicated to the churches concerned.

In announcing his decision to remain at Birmingham, Dale made no secret of the way in which the question had been settled. He said plainly that his own judgment had drawn him to Manchester; that he believed his preaching would be more effective at Cavendish Street than at Carr's Lane; and that his friends were of the same opinion. But the case, he asserted, was not one which could rightly be determined by such considerations alone. His connection with Mr. James had been throughout "a very sacred thing"; it could not be lightly broken. With Mr. James's concurrence, he said, I could have gone to Manchester "with the full and unfaltering conviction that I was following the pillar of cloud and of fire." Without it, he felt that he ought not to leave Carr's Lane even with the prospect of greater usefulness elsewhere; for it is sometimes a man's duty not to choose the work that he can do best, but to accept the work to which in the Divine wisdom he has evidently been set.

Dale recognised that it was his duty in this crisis of his history to leave himself in Mr. James's hands, and to accept his verdict, whatever it might be.

> After earnestly seeking God's guidance, I came at last to this conclusion—that it was my duty to state to Mr. James with perfect frankness and unreserve my own strong convictions of my unfitness for the work which lies before the minister at Carr's Lane, and of my adaptation to the position at Cavendish Street; and that if he, after thoroughly and impartially considering this statement, thought I should remain here, it would be my duty to remain; and that if his judgment concurred with mine, it would be as clearly my duty to go to Manchester. He decided that I ought not to leave you; and so full and clear is my conviction that he had the right to determine this question, that with the perfect consent of my conscience and my judgment I accept his decision.

His conduct throughout illustrates his readiness to defer to authority. Obedience was a virtue that he greatly

honoured. He was quick to recognise its obligations upon himself as upon others. In matters of principle and of faith he could be inflexible, as he had shown in the recent troubles. At any cost—whatever pain he might inflict, whatever suspicion he might incur—he had thought it right to assert his determination to preach the truth as he saw it. But now, when the question at issue related to the conditions under which his work should be done, and not to the laws and principles by which he should be ruled in doing it, he felt that he not only might defer but must defer to Mr. James's judgment, even though it conflicted with his own. Here loyalty had its place, and indifference to its claims would have been dishonour. He surrendered his will ungrudgingly. Never for a moment did he look back or swerve from his course. Weakness is as impotent in self-surrender as in self-assertion ; but his obedience was the outcome not of weakness but of strength.

With increasing experience the burden of the pastorate grew lighter, and Dale found time for work of other kinds. In the autumn of 1856 he began to write for the *Eclectic Review*, then edited by Mr. J. E. Ryland of Northampton. Its best days were over: it had lost the reputation and the influence that it possessed when Josiah Conder was its editor, and when John Foster, Robert Hall, and Dr. Chalmers were among its contributors. But if it had ceased to lead opinion, it was still of service to young writers who wished to try their strength on serious subjects. Dale's relations with the *Eclectic* and its editor soon became intimate. In the literary reminiscences already referred to he says :—

Mr Ryland was a most interesting man—very shy, but, when he overcame his shyness, charming. He was an excellent German scholar, and had a considerable acquaintance with literature. His letters were delightful. In 1856 he was beating about for young writers, and caught Dr. Paton, now of Nottingham, and myself. To me he was very kind. He let me write as often as I liked, and on whatever subjects I liked, and was always pressing me to write more. I remember telling him once that I was much too busy to find time to read some big book that he wanted me to review, and he answered cheerily, in

his quiet voice, "Never mind. I'll read it, if you'll write about it." I was obliged to decline his generous proposal. How long Mr. Ryland retained the editorship of the *Eclectic*, after I began to write for it, I cannot remember; nor can I remember the circumstances which led to his retirement. But in the course of a year or two Dr. Paton became the responsible editor and, in some undefined way, I shared the editorship with him. But Dr. Paton was a man of enormous energy and, as far as editing was concerned, I was very much in the position—I was about to say —of a sleeping partner. That description, however, would be singularly inappropriate; for once or twice in the month Dr. Paton used to come to me about eight or nine o'clock in the evening, and we discussed subjects and writers till midnight, or till two o'clock in the morning, and then he left for his train; so that whatever share I had in editing the *Eclectic* was rather hostile than friendly to sleep.

His first article—on Whately's edition of Bacon's Essays—appeared in September 1856, and during the next three years he continued to write regularly: in fact very few numbers appeared without some contribution from him. His best work was in theology. In dealing with such books as Stanley's *Corinthians*, Maurice's *Gospel of St. John*, Harvey Goodwin's Hulsean Lectures on the Divinity of Christ, and others of the same order, he found himself on familiar ground. His grasp of principle was firm, his vision clear. He always struck at the centre. Mr. Ryland gave him a free hand: only once does it appear that the editorial authority was exercised—in cutting out a dangerous paragraph on "Justification" from a review of Dr. Stoughton's *Ages of Christendom*; as a rule his liberty was unfettered. Three articles on "Christianity and Hinduism," "The Indian Mutiny," and "The Future Government of India," show not only exceptional knowledge, but a remarkable power of dealing with the problems of practical statesmanship. Some of his most effective contributions to the *Review* were concerned with the needs of the Congregational churches. Two articles on the inadequacy of ministerial stipends attracted much attention: the second of these was reprinted, and had a wide circulation. It examined the

remedies proposed for existing evils, and anticipated much that recent discussion has made familiar. He also dealt with the relation of the Theological Colleges to the churches, insisting upon the necessity of radical change if the colleges were to make the best of the material entrusted to them. It was foolish and futile—so it appeared to him—to force all men through the same mill; both those who entered college prepared for more advanced study by their previous education, and those who, having forgotten in business the little that they had learned at school, might make successful preachers, but could never be turned into scholars: the needs of these two classes, he urged, were absolutely distinct, and should be provided for in different ways. He also maintained the necessity of training the student while at college in the practical duties of the pastorate, in order that when placed in charge of a church he might not be suddenly called upon to discharge functions of which he could have had no preliminary experience; and he offered some suggestions as to the way in which such instruction in pastoral theology might be given.

His articles on general literature—fiction for the most part—were less successful. He had not yet acquired the lightness of touch or the ease requisite for work of this kind. His humour was heavy; he was apt to labour his points—to demonstrate where he should have suggested, to spend a paragraph where only a sentence was needed.

A monthly review of events, which ran through the year 1858, displays his growing interest in French politics. In January he regards Louis Napoleon as "a grim necessity—a breakwater against the surges of political fanaticism and unrule"; "for sagacity and energy" he places him "foremost in the royal fraternity of Europe." Larger knowledge soon dispels the illusion, and in a few months the note has changed. "He has no genius but the genius of cunning, and his achievements provoke either indignation or contempt: in his youth and obscurity he signalised himself by his follies, in his matured manhood and the pride of his power he has signalised

himself by his crimes. The working men of England know what 'universal suffrage' means on the lips of Louis Napoleon:—solemn vows, oaths of fidelity to a Republic, basely violated; the destruction of representative institutions; the gagging of the press; the supremacy of an ambitious priesthood." To this estimate he steadily adhered with ever increasing conviction till the tyranny and corruption of the empire met with righteous retribution at Sedan.

The summer of 1858 made a fresh addition to his engagements. Mr. Watts, the theological tutor at Spring Hill, resigned his post; and about the same time Mr. Rogers accepted the Presidency of the Lancashire Independent College, and removed to Manchester. New arrangements became necessary, and Dale undertook the lectures on English Literature, Logic, Philosophy, and Homiletics. His interest in these subjects was keen. He had the freshness and the enterprise of youth. He did not leave his personality at the door of the lecture-room. The abler men among the students who attended his classes were stimulated by his enthusiasm. He broke new ground with them, and they eagerly followed his leading; the plodders were no less grateful for the patience with which he set himself to remove their difficulties. Some of those who then studied under him testify in the strongest terms to his faculty as a teacher. The Rev. R. Tuck writes:—

I have always cherished a very high sense of the value of his instruction, and look upon the short time during which he presided over the college classes as the most inspirational period of my college training. I have been accustomed to say that "Professor Barker taught me how to work, and Professor Dale taught me how to think." What I believe was most impressed upon all the members of his classes was the influence of their contact with a living and independent mind. I retain to this day the memory of some of his philosophical illustrations, which indicated unusual keenness and quickness of observation, singular power in recognising the relations of things, and the higher meanings that underlie the seemingly commonplace.

The Rev. Allan Mines, now of Rock Ferry, recalls a

different part of his work, especially a series of lectures on "The Structure and Preparation of Sermons."

I have always felt myself—and I believe my fellow-students were all of the same opinion—that these lectures were the most interesting, the most helpful, and the most inspiring part of all our college work. He also conducted the Homiletic class during the same session, and I can well remember how the conceit was taken out of us by his severe but righteous criticisms; how he tried his best to discover the slightest trace of genius or originality, and to expose the limping logic and the empty platitude. He had no mercy here; but withal it was done with so much dignity and generosity, and such transparent earnestness, that, though not relished at the time, many of us can say it has been the making of us. . . . His visits to the college were frequent; and his personal intercourse with the students, his long country walks with two or three at a time, and the discussion of knotty questions in theology and philosophy, have left many of us under lasting obligations.

He enjoyed the work, put his whole heart into it, and did it well: as to that all testimonies agree.

It will be easily understood that these engagements, as one followed upon another, claimed all the energies even of an active man. Dale had neither time nor strength to involve himself in local affairs or in denominational business. He did not indeed absent himself from public meetings or from the assemblies of the Congregational Union, but it was rarely that he took a prominent part in the proceedings. His first appearance in Birmingham was at a great meeting held to support "the Patriotic Fund" organised during the Crimean war. Mr. James was asked to speak in the first instance, but he refused, and arranged that the invitation should be transferred to his colleague. A characteristic note came with it. "It will be a fine occasion," Mr. James wrote. "It is a county meeting in the morning. Lord Hill in the chair. Without committing yourself to an *approval* of war, you may refer to his Lordship's great relation — the Lord Hill of Wellington's army—and draw a fine contrast between the war of the sword and the war of the Bible." It is one more instance of the old man's solicitude for his friend's success. But dexterous ambiguity and any concern to

avoid "committing" himself were entirely foreign to Dale's disposition. He was no lover of war, but he was convinced that there are times in the history of nations when war is both inevitable and righteous, and that "to decline the duty of asserting by arms—when all other means have failed—the claims of liberty and justice must bring both shame and disaster." Or, as he once said in later years, "I believe in peace—true peace—at any price; in peace, even at the price of war." These were his convictions, and he would not hide them. And so the speech was framed upon lines very different from those which Mr. James had suggested. He followed Dr. Miller, the Rector of St. Martin's, then at the height of his popularity, who was seen at his best when addressing a great assembly. This gave Dale his opening; he showed how war not only divides but unites; how it draws together parties that are hostile, and even Churches that are estranged. He refused to condemn war without discrimination: if some wars are monstrous and criminal, others are noble and righteous. He rejoiced that the nation had shown itself capable of sacrifice for unselfish aims—not to extend its commerce or to increase its territory, but for the sake of justice, mercy, and truth. And the war so waged was bringing out in its progress some of the most heroic and Christian virtues—not only superb valour, but the patient fortitude of our troops, and the beneficent devotion of Miss Nightingale and her fellow-workers. He also gave utterance to the hopes—the too sanguine hopes—which the friends of freedom then cherished for the oppressed nationalities of Hungary and Poland.[1]

[1] In the structure and the movement of the speech there is much that recalls a splendid passage in Tennyson's *Maud*. That poem indeed was not published till a year later; but Tennyson put into words what many others felt and thought, and the spirit of the speech is perfectly expressed in the famous lines :—

> Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep
> For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,
> Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar;
> And many a darkness into the light shall leap,
> And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,
> And noble thought be freer under the sun,
> And the heart of a people beat with one desire.

The meeting was thoroughly roused; it had not expected much from a young and untried speaker; and the enthusiastic cheering which burst out as he sat down showed that a new force had appeared in the public life of the town.

He did not shrink, even in those days, from taking a line of his own, even when he was in danger of being misunderstood. At a meeting called to discuss a scheme for providing places of recreation for the working-classes, some urged that athletics in general and single-stick in particular should be discountenanced. Dale—though he was no athlete—vigorously protested against a policy so narrow as to ignore that the body had its needs no less than the mind, and so futile as to drive away the vigorous lads who had the strongest claim to sympathy and help. On another occasion, when Mr. Washington Wilks had delivered a lecture on India to a crowded audience in the Music Hall, without any notice a resolution was proposed demanding self-government for India in the largest and most comprehensive terms. Most of those present had no idea that such a declaration of opinion would be asked for, and Dale, whose interest in Indian affairs has already been noticed, rose at once to object. The Indian people, he urged, were not ready for self-government. Even if they had been ready, that was not the time to concede it. The Mutiny was still in full swing. England's first duty was to re-establish law and order, and to visit crime with just retribution. Till this had been done, no other policy could be considered. The lecturer and his friends had no right to snatch a vote, which would be paraded as the verdict of the town. If they wished to test public opinion, let them call a town's-meeting in the ordinary way, at which the whole subject might be discussed by all concerned. The protest was successful; the audience responded to the appeal, and the resolution was withdrawn.

It is not necessary to complete the picture in detail. When Kossuth visited the town in the spring of 1856 Dale seconded the address of welcome, but from local politics he seems to have held entirely aloof. He took no

active part in Bright's first election as member for the borough. One incident, however, is worth recording as a warning to inexperienced orators. One evening in 1858, soon after Donati's comet appeared, he was speaking at the Town Hall, having come in late from another engagement. For a week it had been dark and stormy; but that night, after the meeting had assembled, a sudden change had left a cloudless sky. When called on to speak he soon had his audience well in hand, until, by way of illustration, he referred to the comet—"now blazing with matchless splendour in the heavens." The audience rose at once, and filed out in long lines; within a few minutes the hall was almost empty. The experience, he used to say, taught him to watch, not only what illustrations he used, but when and where he used them.

It was a busy life, full of varied interests, of varied duties; already rich in usefulness, though lacking the concentration of force and the unity of aim by which the highest eminence is achieved. But for the special work which lay before him he could have had no better preparation. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth": the truth of the proverb was illustrated in his experience. At Carr's Lane, at Spring Hill, and in the *Eclectic Review* he learned to combine the powers which in most men are found singly and separated. His power and influence in later life was largely due to the conditions under which his ministry began.

Mr. James's death, after a few hours' illness, early in October 1859, brought a sudden and complete change in Dale's position. A few days later the church met, passed a resolution of unqualified confidence, and confirmed him in the pastorate. After rather more than six years' service, first as assistant and then as co-pastor, he thus became the sole minister of Carr's Lane.

BOOK II

CHAPTER VI[1]

SOLE PASTOR

Birmingham: the place and the people; social, political, religious characteristics—Dale's position—New churches in the suburbs—Christian ethics—Practical teaching—Positive morality—Sermons to the young—The religious life of children—Dominant ideas: the Humanity of Christ; Judgment to come—Christian history—James's Life—Criticism of the *Anxious Enquirer* resented—Mr. T. S. James's pamphlet—Dale's reply—Holiday at Montauban—The Protestant College and its Professors—Theological training in France and in England—The weakness of French Protestantism.

THE changes of the last forty years have left their mark on Birmingham. The town has moved with the main stream of national life; it has been drawn by currents of its own. New forces have come into play; the conditions of social and commercial life have been modified. The population has grown; the suburbs have been swamped by the town; outlying villages have been turned into suburbs. Many men—not only of the wealthier classes, but tradesmen and clerks and mechanics also—spend an hour or more every day upon the rail. The hours of work and the hours of rest are divorced; the home is remote from the business. Isolated communities have formed on all sides, each with interests of its own; and the unity, the solidarity of the town has been so far impaired. But the census returns show that by far the greater part of the people of Birmingham were born either in the town itself, or in its immediate neighbourhood. And so, in spite of all change, the original stock survives;

[1] Much of the material in this chapter has been borrowed from chapter xiii. of the *History of the Corporation of Birmingham*, by John Thackray Bunce.

and it is possible even now to trace the inheritance of temper and tradition. There is no disposition in our time to underestimate the degree in which character is affected by environment. In one sense a man makes his business; in another sense, his business makes the man. The work itself, the materials, the tools, the processes employed, the men with whom he is associated, the place in which he works, all tell upon him. Day after day, year after year, he is moulded and shaped, imperceptibly and unconsciously, by the conditions and circumstances of his daily occupation. These forces may be resisted, they may be controlled; the will within may be stronger than the pressure from without; but whether supreme or subject, they do not cease to act and to affect the prevailing type in the community.

In most of our manufacturing towns some one industry predominates, and its fluctuations raise or depress the prosperity of the place. Birmingham, on the contrary, has always been distinguished by the variety of its trades and products. The report presented to the Board of Health in the year 1849 by their commissioner, Mr. Rawlinson, fastens on this characteristic. Even then there were more than five hundred distinct classes of manufacturers, traders, and dealers; and each class included many branches or subdivisions. This diffusion and variety of occupation, Mr. Rawlinson observed, gave an exceptional elasticity to the trade of the town; it also developed in the workpeople a special facility for changing their work in case of need, and for turning rapidly from one kind of employment to another, and so encouraged freedom and independence of thought and action. This diversity again created and sustained a large number of small factories, employing no great amount of capital and comparatively few workmen. It was, as Dale used to say, a great village. The gap between masters and men was not wide; personal relations were close. Many of the employers had worked at the bench themselves; and a man who was sober, industrious, and intelligent, might hope to rise in the same way. And even if he did not

prosper to this extent, he was not effaced in the crowd of workers; he was not merged in a vast machine. To these and similar causes Mr. Rawlinson attributed the freedom of intercourse between masters and men, the general comfort and intelligence of the workpeople, and the exceptional consideration and kindness of the employers for the employed, that he found to prevail in the town. There was a sturdy independence, but no deep division, no embittered hostility, between class and class.

Such a system, it is obvious, does not help to pile up large fortunes. In those days there were few, if any, millionaires connected with trade in or near Birmingham. The great iron-masters of Staffordshire formed a class apart; but one would have looked in vain for men like the "cotton-lords" of Manchester, or the "merchant-princes" of Liverpool. Wealth was equally diffused; large fortunes were rare. The business world, like the scenery of Warwickshire, was a rolling country, with no projecting peaks. The style of living, even among the wealthier classes, was simple; there was comfort, but little luxury, and no extravagance. The most prosperous, when they moved out into the suburbs, were content with unassuming houses and modest gardens. A carriage and pair was rarely seen in the streets. Many doctors and lawyers still remained in the centre of the town. Newhall Street, the Crescent, the Old Square, and the streets enclosing St. Philip's Churchyard, had not yet been deserted by tenants of this kind. The tide indeed had begun to set outwards, but its full force had not yet been felt. It was still not unusual for the factory and the dwelling-house to stand side by side; thriving tradespeople lived above their shops. The wife and the daughters often took a quiet share in the business. Their pleasures were simple, and their entertainments neither costly nor elaborate.

Political interest in the town was keen; Birmingham had not broken with its traditions. It had stood by the Parliament against the King; Clarendon sets it in the first rank for "hearty, wilful, affected disloyalty." During the

reign of Toryism it had steadily maintained the principles of civil and religious liberty. It had been foremost in the struggle for Parliamentary reform. Now, indeed, passion had cooled and fervour had abated; but the old spirit still lived in the hearts of the people, and in John Bright —after his rejection by the electors of Manchester—they found, not only a representative but a voice, and a leader gifted with a prophet's power to stir and to inspire.

Municipal affairs were at a low ebb. Only a few years had passed since local authority had been consolidated after a long and embittered struggle. In that conflict vigour and enthusiasm had spent themselves, and a period of apathy had set in. The Town Council had neither enterprise nor enthusiasm. It was not without men of character and ability; but they had no coherence of opinion, no bond of union. Their policy was to move slowly, and to do as little as they could. The Council was not corrupt; but the wires were easily pulled in defence of "interests" and for the exaltation of individuals. Meanwhile, the streets, even in the very centre of the town, were mean and sordid — badly paved, and badly lighted; two gas-companies supplied the town, but the public did not profit by their competition. Farther out, row upon row of smoky dwarf houses extended in all directions; and behind the streets lay two thousand close courts, approached by a narrow passage and doorway—for the most part without pavement or drainage. Wells contaminated by the filth that was left to soak into the soil supplied two-thirds of the population. A water company supplied the remaining third on three days in the week. Disease was wide-spread, and the death-rate high. Whole districts were abandoned to vice and crime. As yet, a municipal conscience and municipal statesmanship were only the dream and the ideal of a few younger men whose position was still to make.

The religious life of the town was not without distinctive features. When the Five Mile Act required every clergyman expelled from the English Church by the Act of Uniformity to swear that he held it unlawful under

any circumstances to take up arms against the King, and that he would at no time "endeavour any alteration of government in Church or State," those who refused the oath were forbidden to go within five miles of any borough; and Birmingham—not yet incorporated—became a city of refuge and a stronghold of Dissent. The tradition lasted. Nonconformity kept its hold upon the town, and gained adherents among its most enlightened and prosperous citizens. Even under the old system of local government, they made good their claim to a share of office and authority. Among their pastors they had rarely lacked men of ability, who could hold their own in controversy, and were fitted to take the lead in public affairs.

For very many years Mr. James had been the most conspicuous representative of Evangelical Nonconformity in Birmingham and its neighbourhood. Ability, experience, character, gave him an undisputed primacy by no means confined to the churches of his own order. After his death, two ministers—and only two—had the car of the town—the Rector of St. Martin's, Dr. Miller, and George Dawson, who had broken away from the Baptists, and had gathered about himself a congregation at the Church of the Saviour. Both among Churchmen and Nonconformists there were other men of some distinction—the Rev. G. D. Boyle, now Dean of Salisbury; the present Bishop of Ballarat, Dr. Thornton; the Rev. Dr. Oldknow, then regarded as a Ritualist of an extreme type. But these men, and Nonconformist ministers like the Rev. Charles Vince, who afterwards became one of the most popular and prominent of public men, were almost wholly absorbed by the claims of their parishes and their congregations; and they did not attempt a wider activity. The clergy, moreover, with few exceptions, were drawn from one theological school, and represented one type of thought; for the Evangelical party, through the Simeon and other trustees, held the right of presentation to very many churches; and in making their appointments, it is no breach of charity to say they paid greater

regard to zeal and to orthodoxy than to intellectual force. In ability and reputation, in experience of affairs and practical wisdom, Dr. Miller stood head and shoulders above the men around him. His political sympathies were with the Liberal party; when the members for the borough addressed their constituents, he was generally to be found on the platform. His personal relations with Nonconformists were friendly. Church-rates in Birmingham had been abolished by a local arrangement in the year 1832; and he not only opposed any attempt to restore them in the town, but also declared his desire to put an end to the system altogether. In the Bible Society, and in works of beneficence, he cordially co-operated with the Nonconformist ministers; and in ritual and doctrine the lines of division were thin and faint. Peace was unbroken. Questions of ecclesiastical principle and polity were rarely raised on either side—at any rate outside church and chapel; and most of those who had grown up under Mr. James's influence regarded Edward Miall and the activity of the Anti-State Church Society with suspicion and dislike. Within a few years the state of affairs completely changed. In the controversies that ensued soon after Mr. James's death, Nonconformity in Birmingham began to assert itself as a militant force, demanding religious equality instead of religious toleration; and the Rector of St. Martin's and the minister of Carr's Lane stood out before the town as leaders of contending parties.

But whatever thoughts may have come to Dale's mind of a wider service beyond the limits of his own congregation, the duties of the pastorate—now no longer shared—for the time engrossed his entire strength. Without taking upon himself the oversight and control of the network of agencies thrown out from the church in all directions—an assumption wholly alien to the genius of Congregationalism—the minister of Carr's Lane did his best to keep in touch with every part of the organisation. It was inevitable that he should be called upon to advise and to suggest; that he should be consulted in cases of

difficulty or disagreement; and unless he knew the work and the workers, his counsel would be fruitless and his intervention harmful. To meet the demands that came upon him from day to day was more than enough; if he could do that, he was content to attempt nothing more. He had already overtaxed his strength; signs of coming trouble were apparent; and it would have been the height of imprudence to subject himself to any additional strain. But there was one task that he could not decline; and he undertook, not without reluctance, to write the life of his colleague and friend. All other engagements—his work at Spring Hill, and his literary projects—were abandoned.

Amid all the difficulties of his new position, he was fortunate in having the support, not only of the great majority of the church, but of the men whom the church had put in charge of its affairs. At that time the deacons of Carr's Lane were for the most part old men and grave men—"inconceivably grave men; men grave beyond the dreams of this generation"—so he described them in later years; and the portraits preserved in the deacons' vestry confirm the description. Their personal character and their long service gave them exceptional influence and authority; and, almost without exception, they upheld their young minister with a loyalty that was beyond praise. They were not quite easy, some of them, about the soundness of his theology; some were disturbed by his political opinions; those who had been accustomed to the solemn stateliness of a bygone generation must have been distressed by his manner of speech and bearing. But he had succeeded in winning their respect and their affection, and they stood by him with wonderful patience and consideration. And he, on his side, though he often chafed at their conventionalities and timidities, was not slow in recognising how largely they contributed to the security and strength of his ministry.

During the co-pastorate he had steadily maintained the importance of expansion. A church self-centred and self-absorbed, intent on its own prosperity, and eager to draw in where it should be giving out, was to him the

most melancholy of spectacles. Largely through his influence, and partly at his suggestion, a new chapel had been built at Edgbaston to commemorate Mr. James's jubilee; and he had impressed upon those members of Carr's Lane who had settled in the neighbourhood that it was their plain and obvious duty to associate themselves with the newly formed church, and to spend their strength in its service. To this policy he resolutely adhered; and before long other colonies were established at Moseley, and still farther away at Yardley and Acock's Green. More than two hundred members were thus withdrawn from the mother church within the space of two years, and among them several of its most active workers. Human nature asserts itself in all men, and it was not without a pang that he saw some of his closest friends and most devoted helpers severing the ties that bound them to Carr's Lane: they were loath to go, and he was loath to lose them. But the way of duty was clear, and he never felt a moment's hesitation as to the course which he should follow. A letter addressed to a prominent member of the church, who was moving out of the town in the direction of Yardley, shows how he thought and felt about the matter.

To Mr. Marris

Patterdale, *13th July* 1860.

Long before your letter arrived I had thought over the question which occasioned it, and had you not written I should have taken an early opportunity after my return to press upon you the duty of associating yourself with the new church at Yardley. Of course I cannot think without regret of the necessity of parting with one after another of those to whom in different circumstances I should have looked as the strength and honour of the church in time to come, but I have from the very first recognised the necessity as inseparable from my position at Carr's Lane. It would be equally wrong and foolish to attempt to impede the free and healthy movement of the church outwards; and my personal feelings about the matter I have always and most resolutely set aside. Indeed, although I am pained at having to part with those who have affectionately and heartily

co-operated with me in my ministerial labours, I have also a great joy in being permitted to occupy a post in which I can do so much towards establishing new centres of religious life and activity. I pressed and persuaded many to go up to Edgbaston; if there is any holding back, I shall do the same for Yardley, and the same for Moseley. If Carr's Lane cannot be kept full without an artificial restraining of the natural progress and extension of our denomination, it must be emptied. I at any rate will be no party to a selfish policy.

How grateful I feel that God has made my ministry what you say it has proved to yourself, I need not and cannot say. Doubtless, the conflicts and uncertainties through which I myself have passed have their explanation in the service which on account of them I have been enabled in God's goodness to render to others. It is now my most earnest desire and prayer, that I may be rendered capable of yet higher work. To assist the intellect is much; to quicken the conscience and confirm the righteous will is more. I tremble as I think of the temptation to which you and others must be exposed in business, and fear that I have done but little to make its temptations weaker. The firm resistance of temptation to every form and degree of injustice and unfairness in the practical affairs of life is after all a greater thing than the clearest apprehension of a great truth or the completest victory over a haunting doubt. In the latter direction I fear I have done too little.

Though we must and ought to be separated ecclesiastically, believe me that I shall ever cherish the warmest and most affectionate interest in all that concerns your welfare, and I trust that you will become through God's grace a very eminent blessing to the church with which you ought now to connect yourself.

Incidentally, the letter illustrates a new development in his habits of thought. During the earlier years of his ministry his chief aim had been to establish the central doctrines of the Christian revelation. His interest in theology and in theological speculation was profound, and when he turned aside to other themes it was with a certain reluctance and regret. But now, as he became more familiar with the needs and the perils of his people, Christian morality began to assert its claims to an equal place. The ethical element became more conspicuous in his preaching; and the discovery that some of those who listened to him were disposed to resent a sermon "on

weights and measures," as they described it, and the exclusion of several members from church fellowship on account of irregularities in business, deepened his conviction that it was as necessary to dwell upon Christian conduct as upon Christian truth. He had not ignored these duties before, but he had given them a secondary and subordinate place in his teaching. Now he brought them into the front rank, made them prominent, treated them as primary, forcing it home to heart and conscience that faith and fraud are incompatible; that "the connection between right living and a lofty spirituality is so close that it is vain for any of us to implore God to sanctify us in our religious affections, if we are not striving for sanctity in our ordinary life."[1] In sermons, in addresses, and in letters, he reiterated the same lesson. He was not unaware of the difficulties and the dangers that beset the minister who attempts to deal with the practical problems of daily life. Had it been possible, he would have liked to give up the pulpit now and then to some solicitor, banker, or merchant, who could have spoken both in warning and rebuke with the authority that only experience can command. Habit and custom stood in the way; nor are most men of business capable of addressing a large assembly: he had to do the work himself. With this end in view he set himself to study the inner working of the shop, the office, and the factory; and in course of time his knowledge of business principles and methods, and even of details, was so thorough that it often surprised those whom he consulted and those who consulted him. One young man says: "He seemed to know more about business, with its many temptations and cares, than most men. I could not help feeling that I could never tell him anything about it which he did not know already." Another adds: "No young man asked him for advice who did not get more than he asked for in wise, sagacious counsel, which not only covered the circumstances of the moment but was of life-long value." Some of the precepts which he enforced with all his energy are

[1] Letter to the church, August 1860.

worth recalling. "The eleventh commandment," he used to say, "is, Thou shalt make a balance sheet." In the same way, with a wealth of illustration drawn from actual life, he would insist that "No man has a right to enter business on his own account with insufficient capital." This was sound doctrine for young men eager to escape from service and to set up for themselves, excited by dreams of sudden succees. Many preachers reserve their rebuke for dishonesty in its open and avowed forms; but while he never failed to denounce offences of that kind, his indignation was roused by the folly and the recklessness which are often as ruinous and as criminal as dishonesty itself.

His words carried all the more weight because he never shut his eyes to the facts of life. He never disparaged wealth, or slighted the qualities by which it is acquired. He did not tell men that it is a sin to make money, or to take pleasure in making it. He knew how strong a force wealth exerts; how it fascinates and enthralls; how the passion for it, if left uncontrolled, takes possession of a man's whole being. To expel an instinct so deeply rooted in human nature is impossible; the attempt to expel it savours of Manicheism. But, though not expelled, the instinct may be held in check; and if so restrained, it can be only by some force of even greater power. Such a force, such a motive, Christian faith and Christian loyalty can supply. The man who consecrates the hours of business as truly as the hours of prayer, who carries on his secular calling as the servant of Christ, is safeguarded against the incitements to evil that beset other men; and there is no sure defence beside this. For such a victory over impulse from within and temptation from without, it is useless to rely on a negative and prohibitive code; even positive law is not enough; a man must have that personal devotion which brings with it the strength and the inspiration that enable him to keep the law. Those who are familiar with Dale's utterances in later years know how the thought took root and grew; how it branched out in every direction, until it became

one of the most characteristic elements of his teaching; it may be traced, in germ and suggestion, to a sermon preached about this time on the text, "To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba" (Ps. lxxii. 15).

Anxious as he was about other parts of his work, it is clear that he was most deeply concerned for the young people around him, and for the children of the Church. No long experience is necessary to teach a minister that men and women, when middle life has been reached and the character has become set, do not readily break with their past and rebuild their lives on a new foundation; and that the finest and strongest natures are those in which the religious life has developed quietly and continuously from early childhood. He began at once to make a special appeal to young people, and on New Year's evening, 1860, he delivered the first of those addresses to young men and women, which were continued throughout the whole course of his ministry. The opening sentences of the sermon, in their dignity and gravity, conspicuously illustrate the spirit in which he approached his work.

Although I have announced for this evening a sermon to young persons, I have not thought it necessary to choose a quaint text which would be sure to provoke a smile, or a subject which would afford me the opportunity of being humorous or grotesque. I respect myself too much to attempt to rival in the pulpit the attractions of the Christmas pantomime. I respect you too much to suppose that you come here only to be amused, or that you are indisposed to listen to what appeals to your judgment, your conscience, and all those principles which constitute the dignity and grandeur of your moral nature. I have too profound a reverence for the beauty and majesty of those divine truths which it is the function of my life to study, explain, and enforce, to be willing to insult them by dressing them up in fantastic and harlequin attire, in order to gratify the popular passion for the ludicrous. And above all, I should tremble at the prospect of having to meet you before the Judgment Seat of Christ on the last great day, if to-night I did not endeavour, with all gravity and with an agony of earnestness, to rescue some of you from the sins which in your hearts you despise and loathe even while you commit them, and from the awful danger of ever-

lasting damnation, at the thought of which I know you sometimes tremble.

It was not for adults only—for those who had reached manhood and womanhood, and whose years were rapidly drifting by—that he was concerned. Notwithstanding a deep and genuine affection for children, he never was and never could have been a children's preacher. He made more than one attempt, but his sermons to children, though simple in language, were seldom simple in thought; and he never possessed the passport that admits the stranger into the unknown country of a child's mind. The classes which he held at intervals for many years were far more effective in their influence, especially among the older children. He was a born teacher. He knew how to make religious history and doctrine both clear and interesting. And sitting in his arm-chair, or standing on the hearth-rug in front of the fire in the Carr's Lane Library, where he could address the children by name, he got rid of the remoteness and the awe that he could not shake off in the pulpit. But though he could not preach to children, he never ceased to insist on the possibility and the importance of their conversion. Religion, he knew, could help them as well as older people. But he never forgot that the faith of a child, if it is natural and healthy, has its own type and should never be forced; or that of most children it may be said that if they have no Church in the home, they have no home in the Church.

To the Church at Carr's Lane

Rydal, *23rd June* 1860.

An eminent minister to whom I was speaking a few weeks ago, said that he sometimes told his people that the Christian Church was an institution intended to remove the necessity of adult conversion; and there can be no doubt if we felt this more deeply, our families would present a very different aspect. Not that we should want to see our children becoming prodigies of infant piety; there is often, I fear, a great deal of parental vanity as well as of parental folly in the eagerness with which extra-

ordinary developments of religious experience in little children are watched for, and also in the incessant repetition—often in the presence of the children themselves—of the expressions which have awakened surprise and delight. The piety of a child, if genuine, will be a childish piety; it will have its worth and power by habits of obedience, gentleness, self-sacrifice, and truthfulness. The language of agonising remorse for sin, or of such devotion as only a Paul or a John can feel after years of laborious service and of trying persecution, ought never to be expected from children, and never encouraged; for it cannot be genuine and natural.

Aged 30. During the months of the winter and the spring Dale was working under heavy pressure. He had no relaxations, no amusements, as a safeguard; walking was his only exercise; and walking too often left the mind in the study while the body was abroad. Collapse was inevitable, and was serious when it came. The whole nervous system seemed to have given way. A long holiday was prescribed by the doctors; and June, July, and August were spent away from Birmingham, partly in the English Lakes at Rydal and Patterdale, partly in the remote solitude of the Shetland Isles.

September saw him at home again, and he took up his work with an impetuous vigour. He was busy upon Mr. James's life; and a task that had seemed simple in the outset—for Mr. James had left an autobiography of some length—grew in scope and in difficulty under his hands. At the same time, with an almost reckless profusion of energy, he was launching out upon a long course of experiments relating both to the substance and the method of his preaching. He was feeling his way both in the study and the pulpit; but he has left no records of the processes through which his thought passed as it took shape, and it is easier to trace the evolution of his preaching than of his theology.

In his theological discourses at this time he gave special prominence to the Humanity of Christ and Future Judgment. The mind and the faith of the Church, he felt—partly as the result of controversy, partly through other causes—had fastened upon the Divine element in

our Lord's nature, while the human element had been neglected, ignored, and all but repudiated, to the infinite loss of the Church and the world. He desired to readjust the balance of thought, to restore reality to what had dwindled and degenerated into a shadow. Experience had taught him how men's minds are most effectively approached; and without announcing a course of sermons —indeed without expressly defining the doctrine which he had in view—at short intervals, during a period of some months, he set forth this truth, presented in its various aspects, intellectual, moral, emotional; sometimes, also, when engaged with a wholly different subject, he would introduce it incidentally, or by way of illustration. And so by slow degrees, ever dwelling upon the positive side of truth and destroying nothing, he built up on sure foundations the conviction that he desired to establish.

The sermons on Future Judgment cost him severe effort. From such a subject, and from the thoughts connected with it, his heart recoiled; and he was conscious that even when denouncing sin, he had said too little of the penalties which sin entails. But once aware of the tendency, he was on his guard against it. As yet he had not come to hold the theory which he afterwards accepted—that man is not by nature immortal; that eternal life is attainable only through union with the Lord Jesus Christ; and that the souls of the impenitent are annihilated. He was not convinced that the theory of extinction was warranted by evidence. But the punishment inflicted upon evil-doers he never regarded as material; nor did he indulge in the revolting imagery that has so strong a charm for preachers of a certain type, who forget that the sufferings of the spirit must also be spiritual. It is noteworthy, too, that the sermons relating to this subject are never used a second time; others are repeated, but not these. He seems to have felt that utterance upon a theme so terrible must come fresh from the preacher's heart, forced out of it by an overpowering sense of duty. There are matters about which a man may speak in the force of settled conviction;

here, unless the inspiration be immediate, speech will be ineffective and in vain.

The central doctrines of the Faith were still supreme in his thought; but he was anxious to give his people a wide outlook upon the domain of Christian history and experience. So he began a course of sermons on the early Church, passing onwards from the Acts of the Apostles to other Christian writings, such as the Epistles of Clement and other literature of the same order. Twice, instead of expounding a verse or even a passage from St. Paul's Epistles, he took an Epistle as a whole, and dealt with it in its broad outlines—as an artist might sketch some mountainous island, not with the minute accuracy of the surveyor, but with brief and bold suggestion of peak and valley and stream. In this way he handled the Epistles to the Galatians and the Philippians —each in an evening—making clear the purpose of the Apostle in writing; the errors with which he was in conflict; the truths that he sought to enforce; the method and the sequence of his argument. The multiplication of text-books and commentaries for general use has now made such aid in large measure, though perhaps not wholly, superfluous; for in an ordinary congregation there are still, and always will be, some who learn nothing from books, but depend for their instruction upon the living voice; and the preacher—if he understands his work—can add an element of personal force which disappears in print. But thirty-five years ago, literature of this type was almost unknown; and to many of those who listened to these discourses—intelligent people too—it was a new and an amazing discovery that the Epistles were not abstract treatises on theology, but actual letters, written by a friend to friends, as close to life and as rich in interest as a political speech or a popular lecture.

By the end of April 1861, Mr. James's Life was completed and published—a volume of more than six hundred pages. The *Saturday Review* spoke well of it; but the denominational papers differed in opinion, and were for the most part unfriendly. The notice in the *Noncon-*

formist was openly hostile. The reviewer complained that the book was poor in incident; that it contained much aimless writing; and that it was likely to create an impression unfavourable to ministerial life. The chapter on the co-pastorate was condemned for obtrusive egoism. Other critics objected to the portrait of Mr. James as ungracious and ungenial, and suggested that the nobler elements of his character had been left in the shade.

Such criticism was not quite fair. If the book lacked incident, it was because Mr. James's life—as he himself recorded it in the chapters of autobiography—had been uneventful; and as regards personal qualities Dale's defence was complete. So far as he could he had left Mr. James to speak for himself. His aim had been, not to make the man, but to exhibit him; and if the attempt had failed, it was because in private letters and public utterances Mr. James had imperfectly revealed the real tenderness of his nature. The reviewer's attack upon the account of the co-pastorate showed a singular perversity. Had that part of the book been omitted—indeed, had it been cut short—the impression of Mr. James's character would have been less distinct and less favourable. There it is that the large-heartedness of the man, his unselfishness, and the simplicity of his affection stand out most clearly. The chapter, as Dale explained, was inserted with reluctance, for he was anxious to keep himself in the background, and to avoid even the appearance of self-assertion; but the general protest provoked by the suggestion that this section might be omitted in later editions of the book was too strong to withstand, and the chapter kept its place.

Another part of the book led to more serious trouble. No biography of Mr. James would have been complete without some account of his *Anxious Enquirer*, and a whole chapter was given to an analysis of its contents and to criticism of its theology. The task was one in which Dale delighted, and he set about it with zest. For the spiritual power of the book, for its skill and wisdom in dealing with the human heart, for the passion that glowed

in its pages, his own admiration was profound; nor did he forget, even for a moment, the spell and the charm which it had wielded wherever it had made its way. But when he comes to examine the theology of the author, and the foundations on which he built, the biographer passes into the critic, and the criticism is frank and vigorous. As he once said to a friend, Mr. James was no logician, and could never give a thorough explanation of any point of doctrine. The language in the Memoir is not so sweeping, not so strong; but the feeling is the same and cannot be hidden.

The *Anxious Enquirer*, he contends, shows "a want of firmness and clearness in the statement of Christian doctrine"; and he expressly charged its author with "vacillation" in his treatment of the cardinal doctrine of Justification. In one place, he asserted, Justification and Pardon are carefully distinguished; while on the very next page they are virtually identified, as Mr. James was wont to identify them.

It was Mr. James's habit to tell his congregation that pardon and justification are substantially the same. His great anxiety was to distinguish justification as a change of our personal relationship to God, from sanctification as a change of our personal character; and the virtual identification of justification with pardon enabled him to do this with great ease. There was an obvious practical benefit to be gained in making justification and pardon almost identical; it enabled him to make the distinction between justification and sanctification plain to the most ill-informed and undisciplined minds. To secure this advantage, he seemed almost indifferent to the two theological difficulties in which he manifestly placed himself. If justification be substantially the same as pardon, it cannot consist in the imputation to the sinner of Christ's obedience and sanctification;[1] and secondly, the attempt to distinguish between the two blessings, after affirming them to be substantially the same, must prove a failure.

It would be an error to suppose that this question is one of merely speculative and theological interest. If justification and pardon be "substantially" identified, the soul, when conscious

[1] This was involved in the definition of Justification taken from the Assembly's Larger Catechism, and quoted with approval immediately before.

of needing a renewal of pardon, will practically suppose that its justification needs renewal too; in other words, that it is standing in precisely the same unsheltered and perilous condition which preceded its original reconciliation to God. But if such a theory of justification be held as leaves that great and permanent blessing unaffected by the infirmities, follies, and sins, which are daily confessed, and need daily forgiveness, the soul will be exempted from the shock and injury it must receive, if thrown back day after day into the wretchedness and horror of being under the Divine condemnation. Mr. James saw that justification abides with the soul as long as faith abides; but through making it substantially the same as pardon, for which we need to seek God's mercy every day, he reduced the permanent blessing of justification to insignificance and worthlessness.

With an excess of eagerness to prove his point—for, as a friend once said, "Dale drives in his nails so hard that he splits the wood"—he proceeded to examine Mr. James's teaching as to Faith and its nature. Here again he detected similar vacillation. Mr. James, even when he held the true conception, was apt to let it slip. He distinctly taught that Faith was "Trust in Christ, based on the belief of certain truths about Him"; but in some places he appears to identify Faith, not with Trust in a Person, but with intellectual belief of truths relating to Him. In one and the same paragraph the point of view is shifted; and one sentence implies a theory of Faith that is not recognised in the sentences that stand nearest to it. This confusion of Faith in doctrine with Faith in a Person had misled Dale himself in the early struggles of his religious life; the memory of his own bewilderment and distress was vivid as he wrote; and here—as in his protest against the tendency of the book to divert the mind to the act of Faith from the object of Faith, and to confirm the common error of losing sight of Christ through looking to ourselves to discern whether we are looking to Him—he feels himself on an old battlefield and facing a familiar foe.

Such criticism could not but be resented, and many of Mr. James's friends gave expression to their displeasure; his son—Mr. Thomas Smith James—published a pamphlet

in his father's defence, courteous throughout in spite of the strong feeling by which it was inspired, but ineffectual for conviction. Others, while admitting the criticism to be just, thought that it was out of place. As part of a general survey of Mr. James's theological teaching, such an estimate would have given less offence; but when associated with the book on which his fame chiefly rested, its effect could only be to wound. The two letters that follow require little explanation. The first was written upon the receipt of Mr. Thomas James's pamphlet; the second, some months later, when for the first time Mr. James had stated his objections in detail.

To Mr. T. S. James

30th October 1861.

The copies of your pamphlet reached me just as I was starting for Manchester on Monday, and I have been unable to give it a careful reading till this morning. I greatly regret that you should think any part of my criticism on the *Anxious Enquirer* unjust. That chapter of the Memoir was written under the conviction that hardly anything could contribute so much to the usefulness of your father's life as a careful analysis of his most remarkable book and an account of the elements of its power. He himself calls attention again and again to the contents and manner of the *Anxious Enquirer* as likely to suggest important lessons to preachers; in that opinion I concur, and wrote the criticism, believing it would do something towards increasing the usefulness of your father's book, by placing before preachers the causes of its success. Moreover, as the writing of the *Anxious Enquirer* was the greatest event in your father's history, an extended notice of it was inevitable. Now even if as a biographer I had been released from the obligation which rests on all men to fairness and candour, I should have had too much faith in the solidity of your father's reputation to think it necessary to slur over the imperfections of his book while speaking of its excellences.

But I did not intend to inflict upon you a long letter; I wished simply to acknowledge the pamphlet, and to express my regret that in your judgment there should have been anything in the Memoir to render such a vindication necessary.

To Mr. T. S. James

3rd January 1862.

I have received your letter with the books, and regret very sincerely that I had not had a similar communication before the present edition was issued. It would have relieved me from all doubt and difficulty about the method of dealing with the parts of the "Life" of which you complain. You will remember that you sent back the volume in which I requested you to make any suggestions that occurred to you, with an intimation that the first edition had done the mischief, and that any future change would be powerless to undo it. Had you written then as you have written now, I could have intimated at once that the criticism should be withdrawn. If it would be any satisfaction to you to have the fly-leaves printed the size of the new edition and inserted in the appendix, I will order it to be done at once; and should any future edition be called for, I will take care to confer with you before going to press.

I may just add that your protest in the preface to your volume containing the *Anxious Enquirer* appeared to me to relieve you of responsibility for anything said by me in reference to the book. I have written to Nisbet, stopping the further issue of the edition till I have your reply.

In the fifth edition—for five editions followed rapidly one upon another, in less than a year—the obnoxious passages were omitted, though without any mention of the controversy that they had excited.

As soon as the last sheets of the book had been returned to the printer, Dale left Birmingham for the South of France, where he settled at Montauban, a little town about a hundred and forty miles south-east of Bordeaux, and midway between Toulouse and Cahors. A sister-in-law, settled at Bordeaux, often stayed there, and had suggested the plan to him. It was a small place, surrounded by a fair and fertile country, with the chain of the Pyrenees dimly shadowed in the distance on a clear day. For the chief town of a Department, its population was small—not more than 20,000. As an industrial centre it had its factories and its mills; but even its business ways were leisurely and sedate. It was an

abode of peace; the river ran shining through its streets, and its chimneys did not blacken orchard or vineyard with their smoke. The town had traditions that redeemed it from insignificance. In the great religious wars of France it had fought and suffered. Simon de Montfort besieged and stormed it, when he led his troops in the crusade against the Albigenses. During the eventful struggle of the sixteenth century its inhabitants rose in fury against the Roman Catholics, expelled the monks, and demolished the cathedral. So strong indeed was the Protestant feeling of the place that it was one of the four strongholds given to the Huguenots by the treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye; even after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, liberty of worship, denied in Paris, was conceded there. And through the whole course of that long conflict, its courage and endurance never failed, until at last it shared the defeat of its more famous ally, La Rochelle, and was stripped of its walls and defences by Richelieu. Those heroic days were over; but the memories of the past had not died out. The faith survived; Montauban was still a stronghold of Protestantism; the Theological Seminary of the National Reformed Church was established there, and the Ultramontane bishop of the Roman Catholic Cathedral shared a divided authority with the Protestant pastor.

Dale was profoundly interested in all that he saw. Paris he already knew; but this was his first introduction to a new world and a new people—to that inner life of the French provinces which foreigners are too apt to overlook. He could watch with his own eyes the influence of the two rival forms of faith, and could observe to what instincts and emotions in human nature they severally appealed. While he was there spring passed into summer, and the ripening harvest brought with it a festival that left a lasting impression on his mind; more than once in after years, when preaching to his own people at a harvest thanksgiving, he recalled the ceremony and the thoughts that it had suggested. This is the description that he gave of it:—

The bishop in his most gorgeous robes, the priests in their sacred vestments, the judges and magistrates in their official dress, little children in white carrying garlands, and several hundred soldiers, marched in procession through the chief streets of the city. They had with them the sacred vessels of silver and gold from all the churches of the place; and as they passed along, some were swinging censers of burning incense, and some were chanting solemn litanies; and now and then the military band filled the air with animating and exulting music. There was much in the celebration, with all its artistic beauty, to distress a thoughtful Christian; but there was one part of it which was equally simple and touching. Borne on the shoulders of some in the procession there were rich clusters of grapes, and on the shoulders of others small sheaves of corn, in acknowledgment of the bountiful goodness of God who gave them the vintage and the harvest. Year by year, in this symbolical form, they proclaim that the corn and the wine and the oil are divine gifts; that God opens His hand and supplies the wants of every living thing.

But the chief attraction of the place for him lay in the Protestant College and its staff. With three of the Professors—M. Bois, M. de Félice, and M. Pédézert—he soon became intimate. They were all theologians, and one of them—M. de Félice—was a great preacher. He admired, and imitated, the amplitude of the Puritan divines. For a genuine sermon—a *conférence*—he needed an hour and a half, and would take more if he could get it; when restricted to thirty minutes, he would describe his discourse as *une petite méditation.* All three were as full of talk as their guest, and evening after evening they sat together and discussed subjects of every kind, but especially those that would naturally hold the first place in their minds—the various aspects of Christian truth, as apprehended in England and in France; the secret and the style of famous preachers; the methods of training students for the duties of the pastorate. Upon the last of these questions there was much to say. Dale already had very definite opinions of his own, and all that he saw at Montauban confirmed him in his conviction that the educational system of the Nonconformist colleges in England was miserably inadequate for its purpose and was based upon a wrong foundation. In the account that he gives of the

organisation of the Seminary, he foreshadows some of the changes that he afterwards helped to bring about by the removal of Spring Hill College to Oxford.

Just now there are about seventy-five students in residence, all intending to be pastors; and there are seven Professors.

I sometimes break the tenth commandment when thinking of the magnificent advantages which these young men enjoy for becoming accomplished and learned divines. While some English Nonconformists seem inclined to think that the five or six years' course at St. John's Wood, Manchester, and Spring Hill, must over-educate the ministry, just consider what kind of an education the pastors of the French Church are receiving.

In the first place, *before entering* the Theological School, the students have to take the degree of Bachelor of Letters—a degree which is, perhaps, about equal to the London B.A., minus its requirements in mathematics and natural science. In other words, the Latin and Greek and general scholarship is acquired in the public colleges, before the special theological training begins; an advantage this, which every professor and every student in every Nonconformist college in England can appreciate without a syllable of comment from me. Here the spirit of our professors is broken, and their fire quenched, by the drudgery to which they are obliged to submit — dragging young men fresh from the workshop through the mere rudiments of the Latin and Greek grammar. Work of this kind spoils the professor for the higher departments of his chair; and those students whose early education has been more liberal, have their aims and ambition lowered by being yoked with men wholly destitute of scholarly culture.

In the second place, the course at the Theological College extends over five years, and if the student is negligent in his work, or unpunctual in his attendance at class, the five years may become six. I happened to be present at lecture one morning when the class-room looked unusually empty; the lecturer was struck with the number of vacant benches, and instead of turning to his manuscript, he opened his class-book and began to call the names; in a moment the door burst open, and fifteen students rushed into their places in hot haste, greatly to the amusement of their class-mates and greatly to my amazement. The gentleman sitting by me whispered that these fifteen had all been waiting at the door listening for the *appel*, and that if the Professor had commenced without calling it, they would have slipped off to their studies to their private work. According to

the law of the College, any student absent from class, without a satisfactory excuse, twice in three months, has three months added to his course. Hence these fifteen pairs of ears outside, and hence the rush as soon as the first name on the list was heard. Moreover, if a student does not pass any of his examinations satisfactorily, he is turned back and has his course lengthened. These laws are administered with considerable rigour. This very year several students whose course should have closed this midsummer—and among them one, at least, who had received and provisionally accepted an invitation to a vacant church—having failed in their examinations, have to remain at the *Faculté* still.

Of course no college can give brains to empty skulls; but it would be wonderful if with a five years' course of Theology and Philosophy, Montauban did not send out many accomplished ministers. The French Protestants feel the necessity of culture for their pastors, however indifferent some English Nonconformists may be growing to ministerial scholarship.

At the same time, while alive to the superiority of ministerial training in France, he recognised the weakness of French Protestantism as a religious force. Its pastors —so it seemed to him—had caught the temper and the spirit of a government department; they were content with the decencies and the respectabilities of life; their faith lacked fire and fervour, and had no aggressive impulse, no enterprise, no inspiration. And yet it was precisely these elements that the nation needed most. He never forgot the words of a friend with whom he had once discussed the spiritual and moral condition of the French nation. "An Englishman," she said, "can scarcely understand French unbelief. In your country, when a man becomes an unbeliever, there is always some fibre left in his nature telling of the Christian influences under which he was educated; but in France it is not so. Among those that do not believe, all trace of faith has utterly and absolutely vanished." The task, therefore, of the Christian Church was the more severe and the more momentous; and unless Protestantism could take the field with fresh courage and energy, those who rejected the demands of Rome upon their submission and their credulity, would have no alternative left but blank atheism.

To avert so grave a disaster, Dale was eager that the Protestant Churches in both lands should make common cause. For France, such an alliance might supply the enthusiasm that she lacked; while England also had much to gain as well as to give; for the Christian life and the Christian character of his own countrymen, he felt, could never reach their perfect development so long as they were cut off from Christian influences abroad—islanders in religion as well as in philosophy and literature.

The effect of this visit was lasting, not merely in the intimacies with French theologians and ministers to which it led, but in a wider outlook upon affairs and in a fuller comprehension of feeling and thought in France. It was no less successful in its immediate results. Dale, when he left home, was on the verge of a serious collapse; he returned with strength renewed, and with his nervous system completely restored.

CHAPTER VII

THE BICENTENARY CONTROVERSY AND THE MELBOURNE INVITATION

Fears for health—The Congregational Union at Birmingham—National education—Essays and Reviews—Bicentenary commemoration of 1662—Dr. Miller's lecture on "Churchmen and Dissenters"—Dale's reply—Indignation of the Evangelical clergy—Sir Culling Eardley's visit—Dale stands firm—Faction at Carr's Lane—Invitation to Melbourne—Its issue—Letter to the church.

ABOUT the third week in June the holiday came to an end, and Dale returned home, ready to take up his work and to accept fresh burdens. He became Chairman of the Board of Education at Spring Hill College. He laid the foundation stone of a chapel at Moseley, built in pursuance of the policy that he had advocated. At another stone-laying in the borough cemetery his nerves were put to a severe test. A large block of stone hung by ropes and pulleys, ready for lowering into its place, and while he was offering prayer, the cords broke and the stone fell with a crash. At the moment it was impossible to tell whether any one had been injured, and the alarm was great; but, after a moment's pause, he went on with the prayer, and the panic was checked at once. 1861. Aged 31.

But though his strength had been restored, he was still assailed by those shadowy fears which may be combated but cannot be controlled. Even during the busy months of the autumn, when his mind was full of other things, the haunting terror returned. His force—so it seemed to him—was beginning to decay; his intellectual

vision was growing dim; and upon wide domains of truth, which once lay clear before him, mist and darkness were threatening to descend. He never spoke of these forebodings; they are not mentioned in any letters that have survived; but a written statement preserved among his papers gives us the key to his heart. It begins as follows:—

Nov. 30, 1861. Having sometimes an apprehension that my intellectual powers may before long lose their clearness and vigour, and knowing that life is uncertain, I am anxious to place on record an outline of opinions at which I have arrived on certain great theological questions, by which for many years to come the Church is likely to be agitated. Should I be unable to carry out a purpose which I have long cherished, of fully developing and demonstrating these opinions, some friendly eye may discover in these rough hints what was the outline I intended—God helping me—to fill up.

The paragraph betrays his mood when he wrote. It was not his habit to deal with himself in this way. Till he had reached sixty he kept no diary, nor any such record. Twice or thrice only, when borne down by the supreme sorrows of his life, did he seek relief by giving expression to his pain. His habitual reticence emphasises this disclosure.

But whatever his own fears may have been, no one who watched him at work during the autumn and winter would have suspected any decline of energy or loss of force. Early in October the Congregational Union met at Birmingham, and the burden of local arrangements and organisation rested to a large extent upon his shoulders. Besides this, he had to speak more than once in the course of the meetings—in acknowledgment of a resolution of condolence upon Mr. James's death, and in support of a proposal to establish a new Congregational church in Paris, and to provide for the maintenance of its pastor, a scheme in which his visit to France had led him to cherish a keen interest. He also took part in a memorable debate upon elementary education, in which Dr. Vaughan, abandoning the position that he had hitherto

maintained, declared that elementary education must be the concern of the Churches and not of the State; and that Government aid and Government control, inseparable as they were, could work nothing but mischief. Dale rose to combat the abstract principle, admitting the difficulties involved in any system of national education, but asserting that difficulties did not prove the system to be indefensible. At the same time he declared his preference for a national as compared with a voluntary system, separating himself in the matter from Edward Miall, Samuel Morley, Edward Baines, and the most prominent leaders of Congregationalism at that time.

A few weeks later, a speech that he made at a meeting of the Bible Society in Birmingham attracted much attention. *Essays and Reviews*—a book now remembered mainly through the indiscretion of a future archbishop—had been recently published, and it was then running the gauntlet in almost every religious assembly. At Birmingham, the Earl of Shaftesbury and Dr. Miller fiercely denounced the Essayists and their teaching. Dale, who followed them, gave a new turn to the indictment by raising the question of subscription and the obligations that subscription entails. The fact that Dr. Miller not long before had charged the younger men in the Congregational ministry with a disloyalty to the gospel, begotten of German heresies—an accusation indignantly repudiated—gave additional pungency to the opening sentences.

> The body to which I belong are, as Nonconformists, watching a struggle that is going on between scepticism and a hearty belief in the Lord Jesus Christ; and although we are not members of the community in which that conflict is raging, we feel it to be both our right and our duty to have a voice in the settlement of the controversy. Nothing that concerns the English Church can be uninteresting or unimportant to Englishmen; nothing that affects the religious life and power of any branch of the Christian Church can be uninteresting to any other branch of it. Details of creed and ecclesiastical government are not enough to separate those who are obeying the same sceptre, preaching the same gospel, and engaged in serving the

same world; and on these grounds we who stand outside the Established Church feel that we have a right to say something concerning that which is now proceeding within its limits.

But before any other ground is touched, there is one great question to be settled. We are willing to meet with what learning and ability God has blessed us the objections of doubtful and sceptical minds. But before we can consent to argue with the gentlemen committed to the views against which we protest, we ask, as Englishmen, that in common honesty those gentlemen shall change their position and abandon the church within whose pale they pretend to take shelter. We, as Nonconformists, object to the establishment of any form of religious truth; but while we feel called upon to express clearly and emphatically on all fitting occasions our strong conviction of that great principle, we have further objections to urge against such views as those held by the authors of *Essays and Reviews* being supported out of the revenues of the State and dignified with the honours of the nation. We fear for the morals of the nation, when men who have been consecrated to the priestly office and have taken solemn oaths to preach certain forms of doctrine, unblushingly stand forward as the antagonists of that which they have sworn to maintain. If indeed, as a question of political expediency, men of all opinions are to find a place in a State Church, then I feel that I am expressing the opinion of all my brethren of the Church of England around me, that the sooner the tie between the Church of England and the State is dissolved, the better it will be for the truth.

This vindication of the ethics of subscription was the prelude to a larger and more important controversy. At the Birmingham meetings, the Congregational Union, in response to an appeal from Dr. Vaughan, had determined to celebrate the Bicentenary of the great ejection in the year 1662, when the Act of Uniformity drove two thousand ministers of the Church of England from the churches and parishes to which they had been appointed. Rather later, a conference of Nonconformists was held in London, and an organisation was established for concerted action. The proposal was widely discussed, with much divergence of opinion. It was not easy to agree upon the method and scope of celebration. Some, while willing to commemorate the event as a noble tribute to conscientious

conviction, insisted that it should be regarded in its historical character alone, and that no attempt should be made to give it any controversial application. Such were the terms proposed by the leaders of the Evangelical Alliance as a condition of their support—a compact that could never have been carried out, and rejected, not without indignation, by most of those who had a right to speak in the name of Nonconformity.

In Birmingham the Church made the first move. 1862. Before any Bicentenary meetings had been held or planned by the local committee, the Rev. Joseph Bardsley, then eminent as an ecclesiastical gladiator, lectured in the Town Hall upon the history and the prospects of the Established Church, with special reference to the proposals of the Liberation Society. He was followed a few weeks later by Dr. Miller, who dealt more closely with the point at issue. The title of his lecture was significant:—"Churchmen and Dissenters: their relations as affected by the proposed Bicentenary commemoration of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662." If not exactly a declaration of war, it may not unfairly be described as a warning of hostilities.

Dr. Miller's attitude was in the main that of the Evangelical Alliance. He condemned the Act of Uniformity even when regarded as a measure of retaliation. He denounced the spirit in which it was conceived; the manner in which it was carried out; the recklessness with which King Charles the Second—"that wretched and perfidious profligate"—broke his most solemn pledges; and the folly and fanaticism of the royal counsellors in Church and State. Nor did he fail to do justice to the heroic sacrifice of the ejected clergy: "We honour the men who go out in obedience to conscientious conviction, rather than stay within (the Church) as hypocrites and traitors." "Nevertheless," he continued, "as a question of expediency, we regret this Bicentenary. It is hardly likely, whatever homage it may pay to the rights of conscience, to further the cause of Christian unity and love."

He took objection to the celebration on various grounds. He alleged, in the first place, that modern Dissenters had so entirely changed their position and principles as to lose all vital relation to the men whom they claimed as their spiritual ancestors. This point he went on to argue in detail; and after dealing with some matters of secondary importance, he touched the centre and core of the difference—the fact that the men of 1662 were as friendly as the men of 1862 were hostile to the principle of church establishments. The remainder of his lecture was partly a criticism of the voluntary system—"the commercial system," as he preferred to call it—partly an indictment of those who were leagued together "to destroy" the Church of England. He distinguished "political" from "conscientious" Dissenters, and implied that although for secular purposes the clergy would still act with men of all parties, they could not be expected to co-operate with Liberationists on the platform of the Bible Society or elsewhere. Practically his declaration amounted to this, that any reference to Disestablishment during the celebration would destroy all friendly relations, and that Nonconformists must make their choice between the Liberation Society and association with the clergy of the English Church.

Feeling ran high, both among the audience, who were by no means of one colour, and among those who read the lecture in print. The local Bicentenary Committee determined that a formal reply should be made, and cast about for a spokesman. They applied first to the Rev. Charles Vince; and when he declined the task, they turned to Dale, who accepted the invitation with alacrity. The interval between the two lectures was short—just over a fortnight—and excitement had not yet cooled down. The Town Hall was thronged from end to end; the seats had been removed from the greater part of the floor, where men stood packed in a solid mass; the highest rows in the vast orchestra and the very embrasures in the windows of the deep gallery facing the platform were filled to overflowing; even then, many hundreds were turned away

from the doors, so deeply had the controversy stirred and agitated the town.

It was inevitable that the lecture should open with a historical review; but this part was comparatively brief and dealt with the question on broad lines. Two points in it are worth notice. In the first place, Dale, instead of beginning his retrospect at the struggles under the Commonwealth, went farther back and showed the conflict to be the outcome of that great movement of religious thought which began with the Reformation. In the second place, he condemned unsparingly the intolerance displayed by the Presbyterian party when in power, as exhibited both in the decree that made the use of the Prayer Book, even in families, a penal offence, and also in their bearing towards the Independents. But he was careful not to claim too high a degree of enlightenment for any of those who were concerned in the struggle. With but few exceptions, they had failed to grasp the true principles of religious liberty, and even the Independents for the most part were anxious that religion should be sustained by the revenues of the nation and should be established by the civil power. He pointed out, however, that the rights of conscience and the principle of toleration were far more widely and clearly apprehended among the Independents than among any other religious body in that age.

After tracing the King's tortuous dealings with the Puritans, and describing the sacrifices to which the ejected clergy submitted, he replied to the objection—so often raised at that time and since—that their ejectment was an act of retaliation for the injustice that they themselves had committed. The two cases, he contended, stand in glaring contrast.

> Let it not be forgotten that the Episcopalian clergy had been ejected at a time when the country was convulsed with civil war; the Puritans were ejected when the laws and ancient constitution had been securely restored, and when no danger was to be feared from the Presbyterians if they were treated fairly: that the Episcopalian clergy were almost to a man the known

enemies of the Government that deprived them, and were eager for its destruction; the Presbyterians had never approved the execution of King Charles, or the supremacy of Cromwell; they had cordially helped to bring back the King, and were amongst the most faithful supporters of the throne: that whatever irregularity there may have been in obeying the law, the Parliament had required that a fifth of their former incomes should be granted to the ejected Episcopalians; and that the Government of King Charles not only made no such provision for the Nonconformists, but studiously fixed the day of their ejectment so as to exclude them from the tithes which were justly their due: and finally, Baxter himself, who was an open enemy of the various committees under the Commonwealth for trying ministers and sequestering livings, testifies that in all the counties where he was acquainted, "six to one at least (if not many more) that were sequestered by the committee were, by the oaths of witnesses, proved insufficient or scandalous, or both; especially guilty of drunkenness or swearing; and those that being able, godly preachers, were cast out for the war alone, or their opinions' sake, were comparatively very few"; while the 2000 were ejected not for their vices at all, nor for their inefficiency, nor for their enmity to the Government, but simply because they refused to be false to conscientious convictions, which their opponents might conscientiously have respected.[1]

Then, coming from the past to the present, he proceeded to justify the commemoration. He made short work of the objection taken by Dr. Miller and others — that the ecclesiastical differences between earlier and later Nonconformity were so far-reaching as to preclude any such celebration. That argument had been anticipated both by Dr. Vaughan in his speech before the Congregational Union, and also in the manifesto issued by the Bicentenary Committee. It had been carefully pointed out that the commemoration was not based upon "identity of ecclesiastical or theological faith between the willing Nonconformists of 1862 and the forced Nonconformists of 1662." It was not the opinions, but the conduct of the ejected; their spirit, not their convictions; their fidelity to conscience, not their articles of belief, that were now held up for

[1] "Churchmen and Dissenters: their mutual relations as affected by the celebration of the Bicentenary of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662," pp. 11, 12.

honour and imitation. The ejected ministers, he said, were not claimed as Congregationalists; the vast majority of them were Presbyterians: they were not claimed as Anti-State Churchmen; they belonged to the National Establishment; and had terms of subscription been imposed which they could have conscientiously accepted, they would have remained in it. But yet there were reasons, "strong, manifold, and spirit-stirring," why their memory should be honoured.

In the first place, honour was due to the men who surrendered everything rather than assent and consent to what they believed to be untrue. The time imperatively demanded that all religious parties should "assert the peril and the sin of trickery and equivocation in the profession of religious belief, and should do homage to men who recognised so nobly the awful authority of conscience." During the last five and twenty years, three great sections of the Church had attempted, each in its own way, to deal with the question of subscription. The Tractarians, led by Newman, had attempted to prove that it was possible to sign the articles in one sense and to interpret them in another. More recently, the clerical authors of *Essays and Reviews*, not troubling themselves about creeds and articles at all, had attacked "the central and foundation principles" of the Church's theological system. Further, five hundred clergymen had petitioned for a reform of that Liturgy to which they had all given their "unfeigned assent and consent"; and Dr. Vaughan—then Vicar of Doncaster, afterwards Dean of Llandaff—while desiring to see the form of subscription reconsidered and revised, had resisted the demand on the ground that "whatever remains after revision must be taken as it stands, and interpreted, at least for a generation or two, according to its grammatical sense." "We wish," he continued, "to remind the clergy belonging to these three sections of the Church in our day of the incorruptible fidelity of the two thousand men who never dreamt of sophistries like these; and we think that, in celebrating their honesty, we are doing an important service, not to a party, but to the State; not

to a religious sect, but to all who love God and wish to keep His commandments."[1]

A second reason for celebrating the Bicentenary was the religious liberty which the ejection had helped to secure. For the most part Dale in his reply avoided by-issues, but an allusion of Dr. Miller provoked a vigorous retort. Dr. Miller, in his eagerness to prove that modern Dissent had shifted its ground, and had drawn away from the position of its ancestors, referred to the Gothic architecture, prodigally ornate, of a new Baptist Church in one of the main thoroughfares of the town. Dale admitted that the character of the buildings used for worship by Nonconformists had changed; he suggested an explanation.

It is true that then, and long afterwards, our fathers did not build places of worship with graceful spires, and columns crowned with clustering beauty, and windows rich with purple and gold; they did not feel secure enough in their liberties to invest their money in buildings, of which new political convulsions might deprive them. Even in the trust-deed of my own place of worship, built in the middle of the last century, provision is made for the disposal of the edifice should it ever become illegal to employ it for the purposes of Independent worship; so insecure, even then, in the judgment of our fathers was the religious liberty of the country. They erected mean buildings in obscure places for another reason too; if the magistrate did not touch them, the mob might; and by retreating to courts and lanes, they sought both to avoid public notice and to place their chapels as much as possible beyond the fury of great crowds of people. And as men who have been in prison long get to like the very darkness of their cells, and feel ill at ease when their chains are removed, our fathers got to like the plain dull buildings to which necessity had originally driven them. As for ourselves, we were never in the house of bondage, and have pretty well escaped from its influence, and feel quite at liberty to build our places of worship in another style; and if we sometimes make queer blunders, if "Dissenting Gothic" affords amusement, as well it may very often, to architectural critics, we can only say that we are inexperienced hands at this work, we are improving already, and hope to do better still by and by.[2]

[1] "Churchmen and Dissenters: their mutual relations as affected by the celebration of the Bicentenary of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662," pp. 15, 16.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 16.

After giving other reasons for the commemoration, Dale went on to deal with another objection. It was this part of his address that stirred the audience to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, as it provoked the keenest resentment of opponents.

But still it may be objected that while on some great points we agree with the Nonconformists of 1662, in others we differ from them; and that especially we who object to Establishments altogether are not the persons to do honour to the men whose grievance it was that the terms of subscription did not permit them to remain in the Establishment: the tithes which were taken from them, we say they ought never to have had; the political *status* of which they are deprived, we maintain ought not to belong to the Christian ministry; and it is urged that *we* therefore ought to be silent about the crime of ejecting them, and the loss and suffering which followed. I reply, that we should have been very glad to have given the prominent position in this celebration to other men. We should have been very willing to occupy a subordinate place; instead of speaking we should have rejoiced to applaud while others spoke; it is not in our power to render such a magnificent homage to the memory of the victims of the weakness of Charles and the tyranny of Sheldon as other men might have rendered. There are clergymen ministering at the altars of the English Church, in our own time, who object, as the Two Thousand objected, to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration; to language used in the confirmation service; to the absolution in the service for the visitation of the sick; to the burial service. It belongs, I admit it, to them rather than to us, to do honour to the heroic fidelity to conscience of the men of 1662. They could do it in a nobler fashion, and on a grander scale. The truest, fittest, sublimest celebration of this Bicentenary would be for eight or ten thousand of the Evangelical clergy who object to these services in the Prayer Book, but who obtained their ministerial office and their ministerial income by avowing their "unfeigned assent and consent" to all the book contains, to come out and to declare to the English people that they can no longer retain a position which they acquired by professing to approve what now at least they reject; that they can no longer use in the house of God and at the most touching and solemn crises of human history words which their hearts condemn.[1]

[1] "Churchmen and Dissenters: their mutual relations as affected by the celebration of the Bicentenary of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662," pp. 19, 20.

He next referred to the distinction drawn between "political" and "conscientious" Dissent, and also to the interruption of friendship threatened in case the Bicentenary celebration should be used to enforce the principles of the Liberation Society. This demand for silence, he suggested, had a wider scope than might at first sight appear: the real objection was not to the sermon being preached from that particular text, but to its being preached at all; it was not the occasion but the argument at which offence was taken. As to the two classes into which Dissenters had been divided, he pointed out, after a vigorous protest against the stigma placed on politics, that the "conscientious" Dissenter—so called—is really divided from the Church by a far deeper gulf than his "political" brother. The one objects to the polity, the discipline, the ritual, and the doctrines of the Church; he dissents, not from the Establishment, but from the Church itself. Disestablishment and disendowment would leave him where he stood; his antagonism touches essentials. But the "political" Dissenter, on the contrary, is not hostile to the Church itself; he objects merely to its connection with the State; his objection is confined to what is accidental and not essential. Why then, if "conscientious" Dissent—with its insuperable differences—is no bar to religious communion, should "political" Dissent form an impassable gulf? If it be asserted that friendship is possible between Churchmen and those who object to the Church itself, but must cease when objection is taken to the links that bind the Church to the Civil Power, such language would lead men to believe—without reason—that the Evangelical clergy love the Establishment better than they love the Church itself. Dr. Miller's declaration, though not quoted, must have been in every one's mind as they listened:—"Although we have thousands committed to our charge; though we have sick-beds waiting for us on every side; we will leave everything—our schools, our sick-beds, our studies, our homes—if it becomes a death-struggle for the establishment of the good, old, glorious Church of England."

But whatever course Nonconformists might choose, whether they spoke or were silent, the relations between Church and State, he asserted, would be closely and rigorously examined. Churchmen themselves were already stirring; and he quoted passages from an essay by Dr. Irons, vindicating the spiritual freedom of the Church and protesting against a system which submitted questions of faith to the ultimate decision of a secular Parliament. His own sympathy, he said, went with such a protest. Others might ask for the separation of Church and State on the ground of political expediency; he asked for it because the alliance weakened the Church while professing to strengthen it.

In conclusion, he deprecated the reluctance to discuss these great principles fully and frankly, and especially the menaces by which it was sought to enforce silence.

Again, I ask, why should this discussion be discouraged? If it be answered that controversy must produce alienation between friends, must break up the kindly relationships which years of peace have silently and happily created between men whose judgments differ, I reply that we can see no reason for this estrangement. Serious as are the opinions now in debate they are insignificant compared with those truths—transcendently sublime—in which we all believe. The charity we are so afraid to disturb is worthless if it is not mighty enough to hold our hearts together while we investigate questions like these. To warn us that our protest against the political bondage of the Church must interrupt that measure of religious co-operation which at present exists between Evangelical Dissenters and Evangelical Churchmen may embitter but cannot prevent this controversy; while the continuance of co-operation might help to repress passion, remove misunderstandings, and maintain the remembrance of those points in which we are one.

I deeply regret that at the very opening of the discussion such considerations should be imported into it. Religious fellowship between Christians belonging to different Churches is not merely a pleasant luxury, it is an important aid to religious knowledge and spiritual growth. It satisfies the hunger of the heart. It is a means of grace. It supplies the corrective influences to that narrowness of thought and sympathy which every man is likely to contract who is enclosed within the limits of his own sect or his own party. There are aspects of truth with which you are

familiar which we need to supplement our doctrinal theories; there are types of character among you which may help to rectify tendencies which our ecclesiastical system and history have unduly encouraged. Perhaps there is something among us from which you in your turn may derive benefit. The intercourse of the last twenty years has strengthened the instincts which make hostility a pain and friendship a joy to us. But if fidelity in proclaiming truth which appears to us of infinitely more importance to you than to ourselves is to be visited with this penalty, we have no choice. The penalty—the only one you can inflict—is no slight one; the best men among us, the men with the freest intellect and the warmest heart, will feel it most; but I repeat, we have no choice. For your sakes we cannot be silent. But we gratefully remember that no interruption of external communion can really separate those that love Christ. We are members of one body, and have been baptized into one spirit; and though temporary alienation should arise between us —which may God in His mercy prevent!—we shall still endeavour in another form to maintain communion with that Church which we desire to emancipate. The great doctors and bishops of the Church of England, whose names are her crown of glory and her strong defence, will come to us in our solitude still. The calm wisdom of Richard Hooker, uttered in periods as majestic as the architecture of one of your own cathedrals, shall still instruct us; the fervid eloquence of Jeremy Taylor shall stimulate us to live a Holy Life, and to prepare for a Holy Death; Bishop Hall shall speak to us still of Christ Mystical, and the Blessed Union of Christ and His Members; we shall still find weapons to defend the orthodoxy of the early Church in the writings of Bishop Bull; and shall study Christian ethics in the matchless sermons of Isaac Barrow. We shall still pray that God would send down upon your bishops and curates, and all congregations committed to their charge, the healthful spirit of His grace. We shall thank God for your spiritual triumphs as though they were our own. And, meantime, confident that the principles to which we are committed are in harmony with the genius of the Christian faith, sanctioned by the authority of its Founder, and inseparable from its complete and perfect triumph, we shall wait, with hearts in which we trust that neither malice nor envy nor impatience will have any place, for that time, which is sure to come, and may come soon, when a charity at once more manly and more divine shall reign universally, and when whatever now clouds the splendour or impairs the strength of any Christian Church shall have perished, and perished for ever.

More than once in the course of the evening he had brought the audience to their feet in tumultuous excitement, and now, as he closed with this noble tribute to the National Church, there was a scene of wild enthusiasm. The interest produced by the lecture was not limited to those that heard it. In pamphlet form it ran through edition after edition, and made its way into all parts of the country. The religious newspapers on all sides took note of it; friends and foes alike combined to make it known. Dale found himself suddenly lifted to a new position. The lecture—as he said, looking back on his early years—"fairly launched" him on his career of public service.

Meanwhile it gave a new turn to the local controversy. The advocates and the opponents of the celebration continued their activity; but a war of pamphlets also ensued between the clergy of the two contending schools. High Churchmen pressed Dale's utterances into a campaign against the Evangelicals, and the Evangelicals on their side vindicated their consistency with equal energy. For many weeks the newspapers too were crowded with letters upon all sides of the question.

When matters were at this pass, an effort was made from outside to restore peace. Sir Culling Eardley, the Chairman of the Evangelical Alliance, came down to see if he could make terms between the antagonists. He spent some days in Birmingham, and discussed the question with all concerned. His motives were better than his methods, and he came too late to intervene with success. Dr. Miller had already carried out his threat of withdrawing from the presidency of the Bible Society; and whatever concessions Dale might have been willing to make at an earlier stage of the conflict, he was now immovable.

The passage in his lecture at which the Evangelical clergy took offence was the demand that they should declare that "they can no longer retain a position which they acquired by professing to approve what now at least they reject; that they can no longer use in the House of

God, and at the most touching and solemn crises of human history, words which they in their hearts condemn." Sir Culling Eardley endeavoured to induce Dale to modify these phrases or to explain them away. The earlier part of the correspondence has not been preserved, but in a private letter Eardley urged him to "say something kind and generous" that would remove the imputation on the clergy. To this appeal Dale replied as follows. The reply was not intended for print, but as Sir Culling Eardley in some letters that he sent to the *Record* referred to the correspondence, Dale, finding his hand forced, consented to its publication.

To Sir Culling Eardley

1st May 1862.

Even if I had not received your letter which has just reached me, I should not have permitted you to leave Birmingham without expressing my very hearty appreciation of your noble and generous attempt to prevent the sin and misery which must arise from permanent alienation and estrangement between individuals and communities that serve the same Master, and hope to dwell in the same heaven. Whether successful or not, you will have the joy of knowing that the blessing which Christ has pronounced upon "peacemakers" is yours.

I have no hesitation in answering the inquiries suggested by the paragraph you quote from my recent lecture. What I mean, and what I meant, is that the Evangelical clergy, whether they number seven, or eight, or ten thousand, obtained orders by declaring their approbation of Services, which, taken in their plain grammatical sense, embody doctrines which "now at least they reject"; that they habitually use in the House of God, and at the most solemn crises of human history, words which, taken in their plain grammatical sense, express principles "which their hearts condemn."

That excellent Evangelical clergymen are completely satisfied that the parts of the book which seem to me irreconcilable with Evangelical doctrines may legitimately receive an Evangelical interpretation, I have never dreamt of denying. I should think it very probable that many are at times sorely troubled with what seems to me a discrepancy so startling between what they say in the pulpit and what they say at the font and at the grave mouth; but only God, who knows the hearts of men, can be acquainted

with their mental conflict; and whenever good men tell me that this discrepancy is not felt by themselves, I should think it a violation not only of Christian charity, but of all the principles of common justice, to doubt their word. This same principle I apply not merely to the case of the Evangelical clergy, but to that of the high Tractarian party, and the clerical disciples of Professor Jowett and Dr. Williams. I fear, however, that you over-estimate the effect which these statements on my part may have on the recent decision of some of the Evangelical clergy to retire from religious co-operation with Evangelical Nonconformists.

Dr. Miller, for instance, must have taken the step he has, knowing the hearty love and admiration with which many of us regard him; and knowing that whatever our language might appear to him to mean, we were incapable of suspecting him, or men like him, of a conscious and habitual violation of the authority of conscience. With the keenest regret that he should think us guilty of such a wrong, and with the greatest surprise and pain on account of his recent movements, I have too firm a faith in him, and too strong a love for him, to feel any personal bitterness; and the expressions contained in the closing paragraph of my lecture do but very imperfectly convey what is in my heart towards him and other devout members of the English Church. I have written very frankly, and have no time to weigh words nicely.

There can be no doubt that the incriminated passage was calculated to give offence; and though Dr. Miller, in asserting that the clergy were taxed with deliberate dishonesty and perjury, overstated the case, he and his friends had a reasonable ground of complaint. If Dale wished to say that the Evangelical clergy instinctively but unconsciously rejected in their teaching the doctrines that they had undertaken to maintain, his language is open to misinterpretation: if he meant to say that the passages in the baptismal and burial services and in the service for the visitation of the sick—to which he specially referred—when taken in their plain grammatical sense, in his opinion involved doctrines that the Evangelical clergy repudiated and abhorred, his words needed qualification. In any case, a few years later, he would have found ways of expressing his meaning that would not have left so deep a wound or have so embittered strife. Even as it was, had he been approached without recourse to menace, he

was not the man to have placed any obstacle in the way of conciliation.

The lecture was important, not only because it brought Dale into public notice, but in its effect on his after life. So far as it is possible to speak with any assurance about the chances of human existence, it is certain that but for its influence he would soon have left Birmingham. For more than eighteen months previously he had been sorely distressed by trouble within his church, involving two of its members, both of whom he counted among his personal friends. As the quarrel went on, he had been drawn into it, with the result that one of the two men concerned came to regard him with intense hostility. Even when the case had been finally settled by the verdict of independent arbitrators, chosen from outside the church, a minority, small indeed, but including a few men of position and influence, who had been partisans throughout, still felt themselves aggrieved. They did not conceal their resentment, and Dale had come to mistrust his hold upon the affection and confidence of the church. A long and painful controversy that was constantly breaking out at fresh points, the rupture of friendly relations with men to whom he looked for counsel and support, and the peculiar bitterness of the hostility that he had incurred, left him weary and out of heart: his illness in the previous summer, if not wholly due to this cause, had been aggravated by it. Now, a way of escape suddenly opened before him; and as there was every reason to suppose that the matters in dispute had been finally settled, he felt that he was free to go. A change in the pastorate, he thought, would be good for himself; and he thought it would be good for the church.

At this time, Mr. Binney's recent visit to Australia had drawn attention to the needs of Congregationalism in Victoria. In response to an appeal from the leaders of the churches in that colony, the Committee of the Colonial Missionary Society were seeking for a man who would not only strengthen their own denomination but might also take an active part in the life of the community. Their

thoughts turned to Dale, and they invited him to accept a pastorate in Melbourne.

The position, with all its possibilities of influence and usefulness, was one that attracted him. If he succeeded —and he felt that success was possible—he might leave his mark upon the history of one of our noblest dependencies; he would at least have some part in shaping the thought and life of a society still in the earlier stages of development. And at the same time, without abandoning the work on which his heart was set, he would be able to make a new start, free from the restrictions, the hindrances, and the prejudices entailed by the ecclesiastical system of the mother country. His inward conviction that many—if not most—of his own people would welcome a change in the pastorate confirmed his inclination. But before taking any final step, he told the church and its officers how matters stood, and then took himself away to Rydal to think out the problem among the hills. Aged 32.

If there had been any uncertainty as to the real feeling of the church, that uncertainty was soon dispelled. From the very beginning of his ministry, Dale had never lacked loyal and generous friends: time had added to their number. And among those who were less closely attached to him, the recent controversy, and his part in it, had left a conviction that he was a man with a future, who might live to become a power; the personal attacks, too, that he had drawn on himself touched their sympathy and their pride, and prompted them to rally round him as their natural leader. The church meeting, called to consider the situation, was delayed for a few days, and during the interval the tide of feeling grew in volume and in force. At last his opponents, who had made their influence felt in many ways, were compelled to show their strength. They were badly advised and badly led. Their spokesman, though a man of some position, had neither the vigour nor the voice required for so difficult a task; and instead of boldly opposing the resolution requesting Dale to remain, he proposed that the pastor should be asked to state his reasons for contemplating a change. A bold

policy might have impressed the waverers; but so frivolous and futile an amendment made the opposition ridiculous, and when the vote was taken they did not muster a dozen supporters. The blood of the meeting was up; they showed unmistakably that they intended to put down obstruction and intrigue with a strong hand. Some of the malcontents took a broad hint and removed to other churches; those who remained accepted the vote as final. That night practically stamped out the trouble; and for the next thirty years and more, the peace of the church and the security of its pastor were unbroken.

The letters that follow tell their own story. The decision to remain at Birmingham was only arrived at after a long struggle, and even then not without hesitation.

To Mr. Offord

Rydal, Ambleside,
26th June 1862.

Mrs. Dale sent to a friend of mine in Birmingham yesterday to post you what I think is the most successful of the rather queer set of photographs which have been perpetrated upon me, and I hope it will reach you to-morrow. Give my kind love to John[1] when you send it. By the way, it is just possible that I may look in upon him some morning early next year. Binney and one or two others this side, and some people in Australia, are anxious I should settle in Melbourne. I have been personally invited to a pastorate there, and informally have had suggested to me the pastorate of a church at St. Kilda, one of the suburbs of Melbourne, with the presidency of a new college in Melbourne itself. I have felt strong inclinations to go. My health has been rather poor for some time past, and the complete change might help me. However, the Carr's Lane people have made a very strong demonstration of their attachment and confidence, and of their anxiety that I should remain; and I am a good deal perplexed what to do. Cuthbertson from Sydney comes up here this week or next, and then it must be settled. Mrs. Dale and I with our three children came up here last Monday, and till this morning the weather has been pleasant. We are staying in a couple of cottages standing by themselves on Rydal Water, and enjoy the rest exceedingly. Everything here reminds us of

[1] John Offord, the friend of his boyhood, pp. 7, 8.

Wordsworth, from the hills which he loved so well, down to our little home which he built, and the spoons which bear his initials, and the very sheets which are marked with his name. My brother and I were here last year, and Mrs. Dale and I the year before, so that it seems quite like a second home. Dr. Arnold's old house—his beloved Fox How—is about a mile and a half off, and Wordsworth's new residence about half a mile. The nearest house is about a quarter of a mile from us, and there De Quincey once lived and Hartley Coleridge died. The scenery is to my mind the most perfect I have ever seen.

To Mr. W. Beaumont

Rydal, *2nd July* 1862.

Through you I beg to acknowledge the resolution of the Trustees and Deacons passed at their meeting on the 30th ult., and to thank them very cordially for the promptness with which they have given effect to the wishes of the congregational meeting held on the 23rd.

As I am very anxious that in the event of my remaining at Carr's Lane, the ministerial and pastoral arrangements should now be made so efficient as to anticipate and remove all necessity for revision and alteration, at any rate for many years to come, I think it right to give a full and frank explanation of my views in reference to one department of my work; an explanation I did not feel at liberty to make before the very unambiguous demonstration given last week of the affection and confidence of my people.

In the warmth and earnestness of their personal attachment to me, and their too generous estimate of my public services, they forget for the moment how little they have seen of me at their own homes, and how imperfectly I have fulfilled many of my more private ministerial duties. For this neglect I am unable to reproach myself very seriously, but the consciousness of it has been a constant source of distress to me. Were I much more robust than I am, thorough and prompt attention to these departments of ministerial work would be incompatible with the worthy discharge of those public duties which the minister of Carr's Lane cannot decline, and which he ought not to discharge carelessly and inefficiently.

You cannot have forgotten how frequently Mr. James lamented his inability to carry out his own ideas of pastoral visitation, or how earnestly he maintained the necessity of that kind of work for the comfort and efficient development of the church. In his estimate of its importance I fully concur; and I am sure that

unless some provision for it can be made, Carr's Lane must suffer from the want of it.

For the pulpit I can find time and strength, and I am not conscious that my recent illness has at all affected my capacity for preaching. Nor could I think of delegating to another the responsible and perplexing duty of conversing with those who are troubled by anxiety about their peace with God. I think, too, it would be possible to arrange opportunities for interviews with all persons in the church and congregation who may wish to see me. But as far as private visitation is concerned, I cannot see my way to doing very much more than I have done already, and this is so inadequate to the requirements of the congregation as to occasion me constant disquietude.

It is very true that by a vigorous working of the diaconate and of the district machinery, much visitation by the members of the church of each other might be secured, and I believe that this mutual service would prove one of the most admirable means of developing among us the highest powers and the noblest excellencies of the Christian life; but to sustain and direct this very mechanism requires a very large amount of ministerial thought, time, and co-operation.

I have, therefore, to suggest to the church and congregation, and to its officers through you, the great desirableness of securing an assistant minister to supplement the work of the pastor, and to do what he must leave undone. This proposal is not made with the idea of lightening my own labours, but to promote the efficiency of the religious work among us. Should my way become quite clear to continue at Carr's Lane, I should hope, whether I have an assistant or not, to see more of the people than in the past; but I am quite clear that neither their views about the working of the church nor mine can be carried out by a single minister. It is quite time that we returned to more primitive arrangements, and that we learnt this one lesson at any rate from the machinery of the English Establishment. If our Nonconformist churches are to maintain their strength, it must be not merely by powerful vindications of the principles on which they are founded, but by the perfection and beauty of their working; and I believe that the day is not distant when we shall be unable to find a single Independent church in the country of a magnitude at all approaching to our own, with only one minister at the head of it.

I place this matter through you, my dear sir, before your brethren in office, and the people generally; being encouraged to do so by the cordiality expressed in public last week, and expressed too in many private communications I have received

since the meeting, for all of which I feel deeply grateful. Should the proposal commend itself to the judgment of those with whom the decision of it must rest, I am willing, in the event of remaining, to contribute £50 per annum towards an assistant's salary, on condition that £100 be found elsewhere. Of course the assistant would be appointed by myself and be responsible only to me.

TO THE CHURCH AND CONGREGATION ASSEMBLING AT CARR'S LANE MEETING HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

RYDAL, 11*th July* 1862.

The invitation I lately received to remove to the city of Melbourne involved questions too serious and too complicated to be easily and promptly determined. As many of you know, I have long been impressed with the transcendent importance of securing to the great Australian colonies, in the earliest years of their history, a truely Evangelical theology and a free ecclesiastical system. There is no country in the world where the principles most dear to you and me have the opportunity of obtaining a nobler development or a more commanding influence than them. The ministers labouring in Australia for the next fifty years will have the glory and responsibility of educating a great empire, and of directing the currents of its religious life and thought for a century or two to come.

You can feel no surprise that the claims of the position offered me by the Colonial Missionary Society appeared to me strong and almost irresistible. It appealed to my judgment and fascinated my imagination. For such a work one could gladly sacrifice all that binds the heart with its strongest affections and sympathies to this dear old land.

To this sacrifice, however, on a careful and thoughtful examination of the whole case, I do not feel that I am called; and having pledged myself to communicate my decision to you at the earliest possible moment, I write by the same post to the Secretary of the Colonial Missionary Society, declining their invitation, and to yourselves, that the uncertainty of the last three or four weeks may be terminated.

It is unnecessary that I should detail at length the reasons which have led me to this conclusion; but I cannot pass by the unexpected warmth and earnestness of the demonstrations of your affection and confidence at the recent congregational meeting. Had I felt constrained to leave you, I could have had no hope of finding in any part of the world a church and congregation

that would cherish for me an affection more ardent than yours, or that would manifest a more earnest desire to promote my personal comfort and my ministerial usefulness.

You have already given practical proof that the resolutions passed at that meeting were not the expression of a transient excitement; may I point out some other ways in which you may help to make my heart lighter and my work more hopeful?

For a long time I have been greatly troubled by the habitual absence of a large number of church members and seat-holders from the Sunday evening service. If I could suppose that all the absentees, or even a considerable proportion of them, were engaged in Christian work either in their own families or among their neighbours, I should rejoice; and their vacant places, instead of occasioning me any anxiety, would stimulate and strengthen me. Nor should I be greatly depressed if I could persuade myself that old age, sickness, and distance from Carr's Lane, fully accounted for their absence. But I see very often that the old are present, and the middle-aged are not; that the infirm are present, and the vigorous are not; that those who live farthest away are present, and those who live much nearer are not. The only interpretation that I could put upon this state of things was, that while our services appear to be attractive to many strangers, they fail to interest many of our own people; and this has contributed very much to the fears which have often disturbed me, that my ministry was not adapted to the wants of a considerable number of persons in the congregation. These fears your expressions of loving appreciation have dissipated; what then can be the reason that so many of you are satisfied with attending your own place of worship but once on the Lord's Day? I entreat you to give this question your most devout and earnest consideration. Indifference to public worship cannot be consistent with a healthy condition of the religious life.

The attendance at the Wednesday evening service has occasioned me not less concern. The stress of anxiety and of labour resting upon many of you from the beginning to the end of the week, instead of forming an excuse for absence from the service, should be a reason for making the most strenuous efforts to be there. You need the assistance of public prayer in the middle of the week to prevent the tide of worldliness, checked and thrown back on one Sunday, rising to its former level before the return of the next. There are many, no doubt, so fettered by business and by domestic claims that it is impossible for them to come; but those who can attend should feel that they are called upon to be present, to intercede for the absent as well as to invoke God's blessing upon themselves.

It is now about eight years since I was called to be your pastor. For the first five I had the inestimable advantage and happiness of working under the direction and of being sustained by the affectionate and generous sympathy of one whose memory is among the dearest treasures of the church. To me his death was a loss the greatness of which the lapse of time only illustrates and confirms; to have to bear alone the pressure of responsibilities which while he lived rested mainly upon him, is a severer and more exhausting duty than I had ever anticipated. But sustained by your love, encouraged by your hearty co-operation, and above all strengthened by the exceeding greatness of that Divine power whose constant aid your prayers may secure for me, I can resume my work, if not without apprehension, yet without dismay. Hours of despondency such as I have known too often during the last three years, chilling the heart and enfeebling the brain, will no doubt sometimes return; but if we can trust each other, and look up with confidence to Heaven, these times of gloom and weakness will not remain long, and may, through the loving ministry of God's Spirit, issue in good rather than evil. You and I have entrusted to us great opportunities for serving God and blessing mankind together; let us watch the temper of our spirits, and consecrate ourselves afresh day by day to Him who is our Prince now because once He was our Sacrifice; and our life shall be enriched with deeds which even in heaven we shall look back upon with grateful joy.

The plan for the appointment of an assistant minister, unfortunately, did not take effect. Had Dale made this a condition of remaining—as he should have done—the relief would have been great; it came at last, but too late to be of much avail. When he returned to work, he still had to bear the whole burden.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE IN BIRMINGHAM

Bicentenary controversy—An unwise friend—Work at Carr's Lane—An active church—Contact with the congregation—The Prince of Wales's Wedding: the throne and the people—A night in the House of Commons: the Irish Church—Holiday at Heidelberg—"The Jewish Temple and the Christian Church": its characteristics—Missionary Sermon at Surrey Chapel: "The Living God the Saviour of all men"—Lecture at Exeter Hall: "From Doubt to Faith"—Positive teaching—The importance of theology—Personal appearance: a bearded minister—Mr. Callaway's reminiscences—Dangers of ministerial isolation—Scheme for "Quiet Days"—Graduates' Club.

THE success of the Bicentenary lecture, so closely followed by the Melbourne invitation, materially affected Dale's public position: it gave him prominence and weight. He was recognised as a skilful and eloquent controversialist; demands for speeches or lectures at once began to pour in upon him.

He continued to take an active part in the Bicentenary celebrations, lecturing at Chester, where the Rev. Joseph Bardsley replied to him, and at Kidderminster, where he followed Dr. Charles Wordsworth, the Bishop of St. Andrews. In London he delivered one of a course of lectures at Willis's Rooms, taking for his subject "Nonconformity in 1662 and 1862." He spoke also at a great meeting in St. James's Hall, and at many similar demonstrations in various parts of the country. When the "May meetings" came round in the following spring, he found himself greatly in request, and during the month he pleaded the cause of mission work among the heathen, on the Continent, and at home. At the autumnal session

of the Congregational Union in Liverpool, he vigorously supported a proposal to organise women's work in the Church, and to give it formal and official recognition—amounting practically to the institution of deaconesses as established some years later at Carr's Lane.

But work of this kind, however important and necessary, was not Dale's chief concern. His first duty was to the church at Carr's Lane; the people to whom he had been called to minister were his first care. Hitherto his position had never been free from anxiety: he had not felt himself altogether secure. In spite of the affection by which he was surrounded, and the loyal support that he had received from the church as a whole, he had always been conscious that there were some who looked upon his teaching with suspicion, and whose confidence he had failed to win. His own temperament led him to exaggerate the extent of this hostility and distrust; and it was not till disaffection had come out into the open and had brought matters to an issue, that he was emboldened to banish all such misgivings. The personal controversy that had so deeply distressed him was not yet closed, although the arbitrators had given their award. But the discordant elements were no longer inside the church, and were powerless to disturb its peace; and to whatever private annoyance he himself might be subjected, his influence and efficiency in his pastoral work could not be seriously impaired. At intervals during the next three or four years, efforts were made to renew the strife; but he stood his ground firmly, and would not allow himself to be dragged into any further dispute. Only one incident in this painful history need be noted. A working man employed in a printer's office sent him a copy of a hostile circular intended for distribution. Dale, while grateful to the man for his friendly intention, felt bound to tell him plainly that such conduct was a serious breach of faith, and carefully abstained from taking any action in self-defence until the document had become public property.

TO MR. ——

18th June 1862.

The kindness of your motive in sending me a copy of the circular I quite appreciate; but I cannot lose a moment in expressing my very strong disapprobation of the act. You have really committed what all honourable men must condemn as a serious breach of trust. Whatever information comes to you as a printer, you are as much bound in honour to regard as sacred as a Cabinet Minister is bound to regard as sacred the secrets which come to him in his official capacity, or a lawyer the confidence of his clients. Let me beg of you to permit no motive, however serious, to betray you into an act like this again. A working man has the opportunity in some circumstances of exhibiting as high a sense of honour as a Peer of the realm. These considerations, I can well imagine, have not occurred to you before; let me entreat you henceforth to give them their utmost weight.

The aim and intention of his pulpit work during the months that followed are exceptionally clear. Enthusiasm was running high; the church was full of vigour and enterprise; there was talk of large structural alterations to make the building more commodious and attractive. He rejoiced in the warmth and buoyancy of feeling, and in all the signs of external prosperity; but at the same time he was anxious that the ardour thus awakened should not degenerate into a merely personal devotion, and that the affection stirred by the possibility of separation should be lifted to higher objects. It seemed to him that he was starting afresh in his ministry; and the thought that many who week after week had listened to his preaching, had hitherto listened in vain, filled him with intense solicitude not without hope that past failure might now be retrieved. For many months he avoided purely theological questions; he threw his whole strength into the work of the evangelist, abandoning for the time the task of the teacher. His one concern was to induce the indifferent, the careless, those who doubted, those who denied, to break with their past and to accept the salvation offered them in Christ. Sunday after Sunday he

pleaded with an intensity of earnestness; the appeal was sustained and prolonged through weeks and months.

He was anxious too that the church in all its members should recognise its responsibilities and should be active in service. A profounder reverence for the preacher's office no one could have cherished; but the tendency to limit the functions of the Church to the diffusion of religious knowledge and the cultivation of religious emotion, he regarded with unmitigated hostility. To him the Church implied the abiding presence of Christ, working in its members for their perfecting, and working through them for the redemption of others. At Carr's Lane the numbers were far too large to allow scope for all within the limits of its organised activity; many were engaged elsewhere in every variety of service. But up to this time no systematic inquiry had been made, and it was not known how many were so employed. It was, therefore, with devout thankfulness that he was assured, after careful investigation, that comparatively few of those in connection with the church were left unaccounted for. He did not assume that all were at work who might have been, or that every worker was doing his best; but he was satisfied that the spirit of the church was sound, and that it was in little danger of lapsing into indolence and sloth.

At the same time he sought to strengthen the influence of the pulpit by closer personal relations with the members of his congregation. Systematic visitation, as he learnt by experience, was impossible; but he did his best to reach as many as he could, and to ensure that those in sickness or in sorrow should not be neglected. For himself personal contact with his people was a necessity; if other ministers could do without it, he could not. He was not selfish; but he was apt to be self-absorbed, engrossed by his own thoughts, and so abstracted as to be heedless of those whom he met and of what was going on around him: he often gave offence unwittingly. His nature was not sympathetic. The faculty so freely bestowed on some he had to cultivate sedulously

and patiently, as one of the moral virtues. And even when he felt deeply, he found it hard to express his feeling. He has recorded one of his early experiences which he never forgot.

> Soon after I became a minister, and while I was still a very young man, a great loss fell on a family in my congregation. The husband died a year or two after marriage. I went to see the widow. Her anguish was of that silent, self-restrained sort which it is always most terrible to witness. . . . Her grief was dumb. I was oppressed by it; I could say nothing. The sorrow seemed beyond the reach of comfort; and after sitting for a few minutes I rose in some agitation and went away without saying a word. After I had left the house, and when I had recovered self-possession, I felt humiliated and distressed that I had not spoken; I thought that perhaps it would have been better not to have gone at all. I do not feel so now. Sometimes the only consolation we can offer our friends is to let them know that we feel that their sorrow is too great for any consolation of ours.[1]

He was conscious of his defect, and set himself to overcome it, not as a mere infirmity but as a fault. He became sympathetic by sympathising. And as it not unfrequently happens, the faculty so acquired proved the stronger and the richer for the effort and the trouble it had cost in the winning. Yet even to the last he found it difficult to speak, and it was in his letters that he was best able to give that "touch of the heart" to which the sad and the suffering most readily respond.

To those who knew him as he was in later years, and who in the time of their trouble experienced his power to comfort and to cheer, it may seem incredible that this grace should have been the outcome of discipline and self-mastery. But the fact is indisputable; and in the earnestness with which he was wont to dwell upon the necessity of sympathy, not merely as an adornment but as a virtue essential to the Christian character, he revealed his own experience in endeavour and achievement.

The Bicentenary commemoration was followed by a period devoid of incident; but early in the year 1863

[1] *The Laws of Christ for Common Life*, pp. 133, 134.

came the Prince of Wales's marriage. Opinion in Birmingham was divided as to the method of celebration. The Town Council determined to make no grant out of the rates, but to leave all expenses to be met by voluntary contributions. At a representative meeting of citizens Dale took the lead in combating this decision. The town, he urged, should at least defray the cost of decorating the streets and of illuminating public buildings; such a course was reasonable in itself, and also had the merit of compelling some persons to contribute who would otherwise shirk their duty. Dr. Miller and others supported the appeal, and carried the meeting with them, but the Council would not move from their position. Aged 33.

To the public celebration Dale attached immense importance. On the wedding day, before the festivities began, he addressed the school children of Carr's Lane, who with their friends crowded the building; on the preceding Sunday he preached on Loyalty to the Throne and on the Sacredness of Marriage. It is easy to see what was in his mind. He believed that the nation, like the family, is a divine institution; and that it had come into being, not by any human contract, nor by chance, but by the will of God, and for the development and discipline of character. This truth, he felt, was too much ignored; he desired to secure its fuller recognition, and for the mass of men such a festival as this, if properly used, would do more to impress the sense of national unity upon their minds than any amount of abstract reasoning. He was anxious, too, that Birmingham should be known not only as a centre of freedom but as a centre of loyalty also. Both in speech and in sermon he struck the same note.

It is plain that our loyalty to the throne has suffered no injury from the extension of political rights and from the increasing power of the middle and lower classes in the State. I trust that for many generations at least we shall not come to think of our monarchs simply as the chief magistrates and the mere representatives of the executive government. That veneration and love which we have been accustomed to feel for our sovereigns, however it may be scoffed at by a shallow philosophy, is one of the most indispensable bulwarks of our

national security. The doctrine of the divine right of kings, monstrous in itself, was chiefly to be feared because among a free people it was certain to provoke hostility even to a sober and restrained loyalty. The disappearance of that insane and injurious principle has delivered the manly and rational loyalty of the nation from the greatest of perils. But in whatever country the spirit of independence is strongest, in whatever country personal and political freedom are most perfect and complete, there it is necessary that the authority of the central government should be greatest: moral influence should replace the rigour of laws; reverence for rulers should replace the fear of their vengeance; or else the passion for liberty is likely to degenerate into a fanatical impatience of necessary control, and the excesses of freedom will prepare the way first for anarchy and then for despotism. Nor is it enough, considering the constitution of human nature and the present condition of our people, that there should be reverence for the law and attachment to the State. These are abstract things and need the support of visible symbols and public representatives. It is necessary not only that the judgment of the people should be convinced of the expediency of maintaining order, but that their affections should be firmly attached to the supreme power in the State. Devotion to a Person is a deeper and more powerful passion than respect for the constitution and the law; and every new demonstration of the unabated fervour of English loyalty is a new proof that through whatever storms the country may have to pass, the foundations of public order and tranquillity are still secure.

At the end of June, Dale left home for his summer holiday. His plan was to spend it alone at Heidelberg, studying German, in the hope that a few weeks of steady work would enable him to read theological books with a fair amount of facility. He passed through London on his way, and spent a night in the House of Commons, where he heard Mr. Gladstone for the first time. The business of the day was a motion by Mr. Dillwyn for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, but before this came on, there was a short debate on our relations with America.

To his Wife

London, 30*th June* 1863.

I waited some few minutes in the lobby of the House, as neither Mr. Bright, nor Mr. Scholefield, nor Sir Moreton Peto

happened to be in. However, I very soon caught Mr. Bright, and he took me—not into the ordinary gallery, nor even into the Speaker's gallery, but to the bar of the House,—the place where members of the House of Lords and other distinguished strangers commonly sit. He sat down and chatted with me for a few minutes, and was very pleasant, though evidently sore about the present stagnation of political life. In the course of the evening I heard Gladstone, who spoke very much as I expected. He has infinite fluency, a very pleasant tenor voice, speaks with faultless accuracy, and is wonderfully fertile in his thoughts; but I don't feel that he could impress me as Bright sometimes does. I also heard Roundell Palmer—the man who edited that book of hymns I have, *The Book of Praise;* he spoke admirably; and Disraeli, Layard, Fitzgerald, and Cobden, besides some small fry,—all this before the great debate came on.

Grant Duff opened the ball on the Irish Church in a thoroughly voluntary speech; but he had evidently written it and tried to learn it, and as evidently had not succeeded. An intense Papist also spoke—chiefly pitching into Sir Robert Peel[1] for going to that meeting on behalf of Irish Church Missions. Sir Robert Peel had spoken before this, and it was certainly vastly amusing. He is evidently a great pet in the House, whom he amuses as the gambols of a playful mastiff might amuse anybody not afraid of him. He can't speak a sentence of tolerable English; but there's a *naïveté* about him, and at times a rough boyish wit, which evidently delight the House. The fun was brightened last night by the exceeding absurdity of his being the champion of the Irish Church, or of any Church whatsoever, and by the still greater absurdity of his maintaining with a show of honest indignation that he was not going to be prevented carrying out his personal convictions (that is, in supporting Irish missions) because he was in office; he would a great deal rather go and sit below the gangway. The House laughed, and cheered his self-denial and evangelical zeal.

The best speech of the evening was that by Sir Hugh Cairns, who spoke for an hour or an hour and a half, and made awful havoc of Bernal Osborne's facts. . . . On the whole, I was in luck. The great advantage of the place where I sat was, that in addition to seeing all the members, and hearing them perfectly, I could go in and out. . . . The House did not break up till half-past two, and I got here a little after three. The walk was a very pleasant one, as it was a most beautiful morning.

[1] Son of the Conservative statesman; at that time Chief Secretary for Ireland.

From London he took boat to Rotterdam. The first part of the voyage was familiar, and recalled the days of his boyhood, when he made long excursions down the river with his father and mother; but with the approach to the opposite coast in the early dawn, he found himself, he said, in a new and a strange world—water below and water above; for the morning mist streaming up on all sides, and shining like silver in the growing light, made it difficult to discern where the sea ended and the sky began; and trees and houses and windmills seemed to rise straight out of a limitless lake.

From Rotterdam he made his way up the Rhine by Cologne to Königswinter, where he thought that he would spend a quiet Sunday. The guide-books described it as a village of 1500 inhabitants, but had given no warning of the crowds of excursionists that pour into it from all sides on a fine Sunday during the summer months; and so far as peace and quiet were concerned, he found that he might as well have been at Greenwich or Gravesend. However, he succeeded in escaping from the turmoil; walked up to the summit of the Drachenfels, and sat there for an hour and a half, reading the Sermon on the Mount, and thinking of his own people at home. Early on the Tuesday he reached Heidelberg, where he spent the next six weeks.

For the first few days he took up his quarters in an hotel; but finding that the life did not suit him, and that the solitude was too great, he then arranged to board with Dr. Hofman, his German teacher. The plan was not very successful. Several other persons—some of them English—were staying in the house, and he was not compelled to speak German. He read resolutely and steadily, and made progress; but he soon discovered that German—even theological German—is "a very difficult language"; and the linguistic facility of some of the household did not reconcile him to his own shortcomings.

TO HIS WIFE

HEIDELBERG, *23rd July* 1863.

You would be amused at our supper-table. Nearly every night some new friends of the Hofmans' come in—Russians,

French, Germans, English: it is a regular Tower of Babel; but Mr. Hofman speaks to them in their own languages, and seems as much at home in one language as in another.

You remember I told you of a small prodigy in the linguistic line; I dropped upon another this afternoon. I was sitting at the end of the garden, smoking my pipe, when a girl of twelve, who is one of the numerous people staying in the house, came up; she spoke to me in capital English, and we had a long talk. She has almost forgotten her Russian—her native language is German—she also talks French; and though she never had more than three months' lessons in English, she has contrived to pick up the language wonderfully from playmates and relatives who speak it; she has a capital accent, and reads English books with much greater pleasure than German. She is just commencing Italian—by herself—and finds it, she says, very easy. The children here seem perfect little Polyglots.

Although he was reading for five or six hours a day, he contrived to see something of the surrounding country, with its lovely combination of hill and wood and river. He was fortunate in his first impressions.

To his Wife

Heidelberg, *13th July* 1863.

I read till five; then had tea; and read again till seven; then started out up the Neckar on the right bank. I had no conception the river was so beautiful. The hills on each side are, I think, as high as Loughrigg;[1] they come quite close to the river, and are covered with vines and woods to their very summits. I walked about two miles and a half, and was thinking how much you would have enjoyed it. The castle to-night looked superb. When I got the first sight of it, the deep shadow of the hill on the opposite side of the river fell a little below it, leaving the castle and the upper half of the hill, on which it stands, in a perfect flood of glory. This continued for at least half an hour, the shadow creeping up very gradually.

23rd July 1863.

The beauty of the walk would make you perfectly wild. This afternoon I crossed the Neckar and went two or three miles westward. The country all along was a perfect Eden—the ripe corn coming right to the road without any hedge; every peasant's

[1] Overlooking Rydal and Grasmere.

cottage with its vines; vineyards too on one side of the road here and there, and covering the hills on the right; and on the left, the fertile plain stretching away northwards. I passed through two most picturesque villages. The whole thing is so perfectly new, and so transcendently beautiful, that on a fine evening like this it looks more like dreamland than reality.

I am afraid that after a little while I shall find it rather too dull; and if I did not work pretty close all the morning, it would be intolerable. But I hope the time for quiet thought will do me good in every way. Preaching constantly enfeebles rather than strengthens, I fear, the real power of the religious affections and the authority of the conscience and the Divine Law; and it is a wretched thing to be always conscious that even one's own conceptions of what life ought to be are not attained. More quiet for thought and for communion with God is indispensable, and I hope to turn this lonely life to good account in that way.

The holiday may not have answered all his expectations. He certainly had not mastered the language to the extent that he hoped; he could read it, but he read with effort and difficulty. And as the weeks went by, the prolonged separation from wife and children grew less and less endurable. He had, as he said, got out of the way of living alone, with only strangers about him; and he never repeated the experiment. But when the time came, he returned to his work with fresh vigour of mind and spirit, and not with acquiescence only, but with an eagerness of delight. This was always his mood when he came back to Birmingham after a holiday.

At this moment when I raise my eyes, the Lake of Lucerne with its guardian mountains is before me—the noblest scenery, as some think, in all Europe; but I declare that there is nothing in this magnificent view which makes me feel half the thrill I have sometimes felt when I have looked down on the smoky streets of Birmingham from the railway, as I have returned to my work among you after a holiday. The thought of having to do, more or less directly, with all that mass of human thought and action, which is covered with the ceaseless smoke which hangs over us,—the thought that you and I together may, with God's help, save multitudes—sends the blood through one's veins with an exultation and glow which the most magnificent aspects of the material universe cannot create.

After returning home, Dale took up his work with both hands. He began a series of expository sermons on the Epistle to the Hebrews, afterwards published under the title—*The Jewish Temple and the Christian Church.* When the sermons were ready for publication—his first venture in the field of theology—he awaited the result with some anxiety, but he was soon reassured. The book received a hearty welcome, not only from friendly critics, like Dr. Allon, but from less partial readers also. The earliest commendation came from Dr. Ellicott, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, who pronounced the work to have been done "carefully and heartily." His good opinion was specially welcome; for Dale had the strongest admiration for the precision of his scholarship and the stability of his critical judgment. Other similar tributes soon followed; and the volume, though it has never achieved popularity, passed through nine editions, and still holds its own more than thirty years after its first publication. A few words as to its character and methods may not be out of place.

The book was not intended for scholars; it was written by a busy man for busy people. The writer makes no claim to original research—though Dr. Ginsburg, a rabbinical scholar of repute, had helped him in revision. He had carefully studied, weighed, and tested the researches of the foremost critics. But in his own exposition he discards processes and gives results, save in a few instances where it was possible to present the case in such a form as to make it plain to ordinary intelligence. For example, he discusses the authorship of the epistle, setting forth the various theories that have prevailed, and the arguments on which each theory rests, though without coming to any definite conclusion; while, on the other hand, he does not attempt to examine in detail the chain of quotations from the Jewish Scriptures, by which the author illustrates the supremacy of the Son over the angels; there he gives results—and results only. The discourses were delivered Sunday by Sunday at the ordinary service. A verse by verse analysis was therefore

impracticable; it would have made no impression at the moment; it would soon have been forgotten; it would not have given the kind of help that such an audience needed. His purpose was to deal with the epistle in large masses, not in detail; to trace the general movement of thought and feeling in the writer's mind; to fix the great landmarks, and to attempt nothing more. It was not his method—to borrow an illustration now almost classical—it was not his method to work round the coast, exploring bays and harbours, and even running up the rivers to see where they led to; he sails from point to point, through deep water. But at the close, he leaves us with a distinct idea of the author's line of thought, of the standpoint from which he speaks, of the authority and the motives to which he appeals; and the conception is the clearer because it is not overloaded with a mass of detail.

The book is the work of a busy man; and for that very reason the exposition comes close to practical life and its daily needs. The principles involved in the argument are never treated as if their interest were merely historical; the spiritual truths on which the author of the epistle insists are translated into the speech of our own day. The academic tone and temper are entirely absent; there is no remoteness in his teaching. And although he does not avoid the religious and ecclesiastical controversies of the time, he does not go in search of a quarrel.

Before the task was completed, he had to meet
Aged 34. engagements of another kind. In the spring of 1864 he was invited to preach the annual sermon at Surrey Chapel before the Directors of the London Missionary Society. The office has been discharged by a succession of eminent preachers; its traditions are illustrious; and even now, when such engagements have multiplied, it has not lost its distinction. For a young minister, not yet five-and-thirty, to be selected for such an occasion was a signal honour.

The sermon—"The Living God the Saviour of all

Men"—that Dale preached on 11th May was described by Dean Alford in the *Contemporary Review* as "one of the noblest that we have ever read."[1] And though thought has moved and taste has changed since then, the discourse still remains impressive in its loftiness and power. It is far too long—the audience found it so at the time. The preacher followed a perilous precedent. Mr. James, on a similar occasion, broke off at the end of an hour through sheer exhaustion, and rested for a few minutes while the congregation sang a hymn; oranges were thrown into the pulpit to refresh him, and he then started again and "thundered on for another hour."[2] The gravity of some present, one would think, even in a simpler age than ours, must have been sorely tried. On the present occasion no such relief was needed or given. For two hours the preacher swept along with unflagging energy; and when at last the discourse drew to its end, he had still vigour enough in reserve to rise from the high level on which he had been moving to an impassioned close.

In the autumn of the same year he lectured to young men at the Exeter Hall. Among the other lecturers in the same course were the Dean of Chester, Dr. Howson; Dr. John Cairns; Dr. Miller; the Rev. W. M. Punshon; and Dr. Magee, afterwards famous as the Bishop of Peterborough. Dale's lecture—"From Doubt to Faith"—had for its subject the evidences of Christianity. It proposed to answer the question—What solid reason is there for believing the Christian story? In the earlier portion, pursuing a line of argument that he developed more fully in "The Living Christ and the Four Gospels," he endeavoured to show that the gospel story as known in the first century was in substance, if not in detail, such as it has come down to us, and that the miraculous elements in it could not have been devised and interpolated by later superstition. In the concluding portion of the lecture he dealt with the objections of Hume and

[1] *Contemporary Review*, July 1866, p. 350.
[2] *Life of John Angell James*, p. 144.

Renan and other hostile critics to the credibility of miracles, and with the expedients by which they have endeavoured to discredit and to destroy all that is superhuman in the New Testament narrative.

A detailed analysis either of the lecture, the missionary sermon, or of other similar discourses, would be tedious. But it may not be amiss to refer to some of the characteristics that they reveal. There are some men whose thought seems to spring entirely from within themselves. Their minds stand apart and aloof from the interests and excitements of their day. The forces which mould even where they do not master leave them untouched. In their intellectual life they are like—

> A lonely mountain tarn,
> Unvisited by any streams.

Dale's mind was not of this type. His sermons reflect the conflict and turmoil of the time. He deals with the new ideas which had now passed out of the study into the street. He discusses all that was then filling men's minds —physical science with its discoveries and its dreams, criticism impetuous in destruction, the High Church movement again advancing after a brief recoil; antagonistic forces, but all making for change and unrest. He felt the shock of each; and as one called to watch for the souls of men, in discharge of his duty he endeavoured to prepare his people to withstand the assaults to which their faith would be exposed. Neither for them nor for himself would he ignore the conflict or evade the issue. He was ready to defend the frontiers of the spiritual kingdom against the encroachments of science, to discuss the sufficiency of a philosophic system that begins and ends in the region of matter, to meet criticism with its own weapons, to examine the assumptions of Romanists and Romanisers in the light of Scripture and of history. But he had little faith in the efficacy of the ordinary methods of controversy to repel such attacks. Even for the purposes of defence he urged the importance of

cultivating nobler and loftier conceptions of religious truth.

It is surely a melancholy sign of the spirit of these times that, while much public curiosity and interest are excited by questions purely ecclesiastical, and by controversies which involve some of the elementary and preliminary inquiries connected with divine revelation, there are so few men of great powers who address themselves laboriously to the deeper and grander truths of the Christian faith. The race of theologians seems for the present almost extinct. We look in vain for the genius and scholarship which should instruct our own generation in those doctrines which are most characteristic of apostolical Christianity. I doubt the policy of devoting all our strength to repel the assaults of unbelievers; we should more certainly win the judgments and impress the hearts of men, if we gave at least equal pains to the elaboration of the positive teaching of Christ and His Spirit. It will be almost in vain that you demonstrate the historical truth of the gospel history; in vain even that you prove that Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh, unless you proceed to show adequate cause for His Incarnation, for the sorrows of His life, and the shame and agony of His death. But to illustrate and unfold the glorious mystery of His Atonement, to present to the mind and conscience of our contemporaries any worthy exhibition of its moral significance, is a task requiring powers of another order than are engaged at present in religious controversy.

The strain was severe. Month after month he was taxing his strength to the extreme limit of endurance. Even when he was away from work, he did not find it easy to rest. A letter to Dr. Allon, already one of his closest and dearest friends, reflects his own experience.

To the Rev. Henry Allon

23rd August 1864.

I congratulate you on the discovery of a new talent. That God had given you many gifts I knew, but did not know that He had given you a genius for idleness, and yet that too is necessary for the man *teres et rotundus;* but I fear that you haven't it in sufficient measure for you ever to be able to lay claim to the second epithet.

What a relief to Mrs. Allon to have you really idle for a fortnight! It must be like the stoppage of a cotton-mill to the man

who lives at the works. And yet I cannot help thinking that even in your rest there are uncomfortable indications of your restless energy; you know how a locomotive rests, until the fire is finally raked out; it simply blows off steam and demonstrates its fierce vehemence almost as much when standing still as when sweeping along at the rate of sixty miles an hour. Your fire, I hope, will be a long time before it is "raked," and meanwhile even "blowing off" is better than always pulling the express.

Writing to his father about the same time, he says:—

I keep tolerably well, but somehow seem to be unable to get the spring and vigour I want for my work, and am afraid I shall not be right until I can get a few days away from home. I was preaching in Manchester on Thursday, and speaking in the Free Trade Hall on Tuesday; the change seemed to do me good at the time but soon passed off.

But in spite of temporary weakness and prostration, he was gaining strength. His constitution was becoming more robust; the nervous depression from which he had suffered so much and so often in the earlier years of his ministry was passing away. His outward appearance also was beginning to change. He was already conspicuous by the foreign appearance of his swarthy complexion and his lustrous eyes. Abroad, he often found it hard to make people believe that he was an Englishman; and at home a crowd once gathered on the platform at Rugby round the windows of the railway carriage, persuaded that the dark man in the red fez and his younger companion were members of the Egyptian embassy then in England. One of the many stories told about him—Dale fathered it on his friend, Dr. Allon—was on its rounds for years, always turning up in some new place and in some fresh setting. This was its original form: "An old lady who for many years had refused to subscribe to Foreign Missions, heard Dale preach at Surrey Chapel and at once became a regular contributor. When asked why, she said that she had never thought much of missions before; but when she saw what the grace of God had done for that poor Hindoo, she could refuse to subscribe no longer."

But conspicuous as he was at that time, no one would have associated their thought of him with the broad-shouldered massive figure of later years. In 1860 he was still thin and slight, 5 feet 10 in stature, and showing every inch of it; clean-shaven, but with "long black hair that hung over his cheeks and ears like a mane," somewhat careless in dress, though still conforming to the conventions of ministerial attire. But in the course of a year or two he began to fill out. His hair was cut short and brushed straight back from the forehead. He let his beard grow, and then, after some hesitation, his moustache. Many of the older people were scandalised but silent; some wrote to the newspapers in protest. The moustache was declared to invest ministers "with an air of levity and worldliness." A letter of approval purported to come from the shade of a Wesleyan minister, the Rev. H. D. Lowe, who in 1828 had his beard cut off by order of the Wesleyan Conference. It ran as follows :— Aged 31-4.

REVEREND AND BEARDED SIR—It rejoiced my shade to see you not only addressing Methodists, but sitting amongst many of the identical men who required that cruel sacrifice of me, and that you were unrebuked when you even spoke of dreaming of belonging to the "Legal Hundred," bearded though you are.

The white tie was discarded at the same time. He appeared in gray, and in lighter colours, instead of black. During one winter he frequently wore a pair of leggings, which the volunteers had then made fashionable.

This was not his only breach with convention. Before 1862 he had not been a smoker. But the habit once acquired, he found in it a great relief. His pipe was an offence to some of the older ministers. Mr. Callaway describes an encounter with one of the most eminent—the Rev. James Parsons of York :—

Mr. Parsons being at my ordination, Mr. Dale asked him, Mr. Vince, and me to dinner. Before dinner, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Dale, and I went up into the study. Mr. Dale got his pipe. "I think," said he to Mr. Parsons, "if I had smoked, I should have escaped my illness last year." "What?" said Mr. Parsons.

"I think if I had smoked, I should have escaped my illness last year." "Nonsense," said Mr. Parsons, with most contemptuous emphasis, and ended the matter.[1]

This larger freedom in external things that Dale allowed himself did not imply any abatement of earnestness and zeal. In some ways he was stricter with himself than before, more solicitous for the efficiency of his work. Mr. Callaway, a friend who knew his mind then better than any one else, records more than one instance of this.[2]

On Monday morning we were talking of preaching as usual. He said he was very much troubled about his own. He seemed not to improve, he said, and was sensible of great want of effectiveness. I could not see why he should think so. He was not altered in his opinion, but appeared low-spirited about it.

One morning about this time Mr. Dale said he had not slept much last night. He was not very well, and had read McAll's sermon on "The Unfaithful Minister" before going to bed, which was too much for him—kept him awake. He got the book and made me read the latter part of the sermon aloud, commenting as I went along. He said the minister to whom the sermon was delivered as a "Charge" fainted under it.

He was acutely conscious of the solitariness of ministerial life, and of its injurious effect upon spiritual health. In his own experience he found that it inclined him to "regard religion merely as a study and to deprive it of all liveliness." To counteract this evil influence, he drew up an elaborate scheme for ministers' meetings, similar in some respects to the system of "Quiet Days" as now in use. He proposed that the members of the

[1] Mr. James too felt strongly about the matter. "I forgot to ask if you smoked. If you have contracted this habit, I beseech you to break it. To me it appears of so much importance that it would tend to disturb our intercourse if you were addicted to this habit. . . . You can have but little idea with what disgust and loathing it is regarded by many of our people" (*Life of John Angell James*, p. 461).

[2] For two or three years Callaway came to his house every Monday morning to read the Greek Testament, and in the talk that always followed Dale spoke to him with a great absence of reserve about his own spiritual conflicts and difficulties. Callaway kept notes of some of these conversations, which have been freely used. For a fuller account of the relations between the two, see Recollections by R. W. Dale in the *Life of W. F. Callaway*, by Eric A. Lawrence, pp. 271-286.

association—who were not to be too numerous—should meet annually at some farmhouse or such like place, at a time when the country is uninviting—say February—under the direction of a president invested for the occasion with absolute authority. The meeting was to last for a week, with set times for rising, meals, meditation, exercise, and conversation, not less than two hours a day being given to prayer. In the evening, it was suggested, a paper should be read and submitted for discussion. The rules, practices, and membership of the association were to be regarded as secret.

The plan was never carried out in its entirety; but a less ambitious arrangement was adopted for a day's meeting at regular intervals. Dale welcomed the suggestion, says Mr. Callaway, in default of anything better, and "went earnestly into it with a silent solemnity unusual in him to my thinking." To him this contact with other men engaged in the same work was a great resource and refreshment; and he never failed to enforce upon others the necessity of maintaining intimate relations with their ministerial brethren. In more than one case of which he had personal knowledge, he attributed failure in the pastorate to disregard of this duty. For himself, he took every opportunity of tightening the ties that bound him to his fellow-workers: no slight cause could keep him away from the meetings of such an association.

For many years he was a regular attendant also at a club established in the town for university graduates. It brought together men of varied opinions and callings; and helped to keep them together when political and ecclesiastical conflict was most keen. And even if the talk was not always strictly relevant to the subject set down for discussion, it was often helpful in promoting comprehension and sympathy. The club in its beginning had several members of eminent distinction—among them Dr. Badham, Canon Evans, and Dr. Boyle, now the Dean of Salisbury, who, as the following letter shows, did not allow the ties of friendship to be broken by his removal from the Midlands.

FROM THE DEAN OF SALISBURY

DEANERY, SALISBURY, *8th Nov.* 1895.

I grieve to say that the very interesting letter I enclose is the only one I now possess of your father's. We had a most friendly correspondence at one time on the subject of ministerial orders, but at his wish I did not keep them. I often wish I had had his leave to preserve them. They were full of interest, and he wrote to me with perfect frankness. At last he said in one of them, "You believe in a delegation of power to ministers. I believe in that also, but yours is to come from authority of your chief pastors, mine from the general body of the faithful." He used to rally me sometimes on my love for F. D. Maurice, and yet on one journey we had together he said, "Do you know, I am coming to think much as you and F. D. M. about baptism."

These were almost the only social distractions that he allowed himself. The hours of the day were rigorously husbanded for public work and private study. If he could meet the demands of immediate duty, he was content, even though he had to abandon many schemes on which his heart was set. "I should be perfectly happy," he wrote, "if there were forty-eight hours in the day, and I could do without sleeping." It was a laborious and lonely life.

CHAPTER IX

LIFE IN BIRMINGHAM—THEOLOGY AND LITERATURE

A child's death—Town Hall services—"Anglicanism and Romanism"—Dr. Oldknow—Writes on the Lord's Supper—*British Quarterly* articles on the Atonement—The theory of the articles and the theory of his lectures: similarities and differences—"Discourses on Special Occasions"—Dean Alford's review—Magazine articles—Lacordaire—"Week-day Sermons"—Compiles a hymn-book—Defects of modern hymns—Mr. T. H. Gill's hymns—What a hymn should be.

IN the spring of 1865 it was decided to carry out extensive alterations at Carr's Lane. That the Sunday services might not be interrupted, the Town Hall was engaged for several weeks. Dale arranged to take his holiday before the strain began, and with his wife and children went to Pensarn, a little village on the Welsh coast, a mile or two from Abergele, where the Irish Mail was burnt not very long after. There he spent a quiet month, resting, and meditating the sermons that he would have to preach on his return. Just as the holiday was coming to a close, scarlet fever broke out in the household. The eldest girl could not be moved; the second—Alice, then six years old—was taken home before any symptoms of disease had as yet appeared. But in a few days she also sickened, and the fever in her case assumed a virulent form. From the first there was but little hope, and within a week the struggle was over. Aged 35.

TO HIS WIFE

24th June 1865.

You know the tidings which this letter brings as soon as you open it. Our darling Alice—so bright, so loving—has heard

the voice of the Lord Jesus, and has gone to be with Him. All day long the possibility of this coming to pass has seemed to me a most unspeakable and cutting grief; my heart has been torn as I looked on her, but now it is all over; though it hangs heavily on me, I can think thankfully of her freedom from suffering and from the possibility of sin. Mr. Bindley and Mr. Berry[1] and I knelt down together an hour before her death, and I prayed as well as I could that God, in His tender pity, would spare her to us; but even then I could say that I would rather He took her to Himself at once than that she should grow up and not be a good Christian woman. It is hard to think she could have become anything else, but now we know the darling is safe. . . . God give us grace to bring up the other children so that they may all follow her to glory. This is our first death; —our hearts must cling to each other more than ever.

The letter that carried the news to Pensarn rather hides than reveals his anguish. The stroke cut down into the very depths of his heart. Alice was the brightest and the most demonstrative of the children; she was buoyant and winsome, with a gladness that bubbled over, a frankness and candour that defied reserve. Her death darkened his whole life. For years after he could not trust himself to speak of her. His sorrow found no relief in words. Broken sentences of passionate appeal left among his papers—a note on a sermon often used before but never used again, "the last sermon that my darling Alice heard"—and an allusion here and there in the utterances of after years, show that the vacant chamber in the heart was never filled. At the funeral, after days of relentless self-restraint, he broke down utterly and irretrievably, and childish memory still recalls the intolerable agony of a strong man, and the pitiless blue of the summer sky above the open grave.

The child was buried on a Wednesday; the services in the Town Hall began on the following Sunday, and were to last for seven weeks. To face such a congregation so soon after his bereavement strained both strength and nerve, but Dale determined to make the effort, conscious that work would brace him as nothing else could,

[1] The family doctors; both were deacons of Carr's Lane.

and with the conviction, as he said, that "it is always better to walk in the path of duty, though with trembling steps, than to lie down on the earth and moan."

Dale had already passed out of the stage in which he needed advertisement or introduction among his fellow-townsmen, but these services brought many to hear him who would never have heard him elsewhere. The Town Hall was neutral ground. Loyal Churchmen could go there without scruple or self-reproach. Others who were never seen in any place of worship felt that their presence in such a building committed them to nothing; they came—and came again. And working-men and women, who abhor pews and any system of allotted seats, felt at home on the familiar benches where they were wont to listen to great orators or to the queens of song. All creeds and all classes were represented in the congregations that gathered there Sunday after Sunday for nearly two months, and the influence of the preaching went forth in all directions. Many years later, Cardinal Newman, lamenting his own isolation from the people among whom he lived, and the failure of others to reach them, referred with thankfulness to the hold that Dale had upon the town, and to the force with which he preached the gospel. These services helped in no slight measure to invest him with the power which time extended and enlarged.

He had prepared himself to deal with the fundamental truths of the Christian faith—not indeed without some intermission and relief, but to the entire exclusion of what would be generally described as "popular" subjects.

In the treatment, as in the choice of his subjects, he aimed high. While leaving his eloquence full play, he did not hesitate to make large demands on the intellect; and the sermons were long as well as elaborate. But the crowds did not lessen as the weeks went by; the interest was sustained; nor was the attraction wholly or even mainly due to the magnificence of the spectacle, and to the thrilling effect of the music.

The first sermon—on "Worship"—was suggested by the unusual conditions under which they met as a con-

gregation. At succeeding services he preached on the Incarnation, Our Lord's Death, the Atonement, Justification by Faith, the Loneliness of the Soul, Individual Responsibility, and Judgment to Come; on the last Sunday evening he preached on Morality and Religion. His closing words were a solemn appeal to those who had heard him there, but would never hear him again.

In the sermons I have already delivered in this place I have stated fully the great and characteristic truths of the Christian Revelation, and urged you to repent of sin and trust in the mercy of God, as revealed through our Lord Jesus Christ, for forgiveness, for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and for eternal life; but now once more, and for the last time, in the presence of Him who became man for us sinners and our salvation, died the Just for the unjust, rose again to be the Prince and the Saviour of man to the end of time, I implore you not to neglect those critical duties which determine your present relationship to God and your future destiny. Many of you, I know, will never come to hear me preach again; this, this is my final message to you—God became man and died on the cross that He might rescue you and me from sin and wretchedness; to be ungrateful for His love, to reject His mercy, is wilfully to put away from you a life of communion with God on this side of death, and immortality and holiness and glory in the world to come.

Aged 36. After returning to Carr's Lane, his mind began to work with new energy upon a set of subjects to which he was strongly drawn—the nature and office of the Church, the theory of the Atonement, and the purpose and character of the Lord's Supper. On none of these subjects had he yet reached his final conclusions, but the direction in which he was moving now began to appear. The editorship of the *British Quarterly Review* had recently passed into the hands of his friend Dr. Allon—on whom the burden chiefly rested—and Dr. Reynolds, the Principal of Cheshunt College. They welcomed him as a contributor, and in the second number of the *Review* in 1866 he wrote on "Anglicanism and Romanism," discussing at great length the controversy in which Dr. Pusey and Cardinal Manning were then engaged, with special reference to Pusey's *Eirenicon* — a book, he said, "which has the

double merit of being an effective warning to all Nonconformists against entering the Church of England, and to all Protestants against entering the Church of Rome." Along these two lines he developed his argument.[1]

Manning had set himself to provoke a conflict, fastening upon a statement of Pusey's that many devout Roman Catholics rejoiced in "all the workings of God the Holy Ghost in the Church of England," and regarded it as "the great bulwark against infidelity in this land." He refused to recognise the English Church as any part of the Catholic Church, or in any divine and true sense as a Church at all. A bulwark against infidelity? It is "the original source of the present spiritual anarchy"; it not only "propagates unbelief," but does so "by principle, and in the essence of its whole system"; so far from obstructing infidelity, "it has floated before it"—in such terms did Manning denounce the communion that he had forsaken. And then—well knowing where to fix the dart—he explains that, while recognising the working of grace in the English Church, "we as joyfully recognise the working of the Holy Spirit among Dissenters of every kind"; and he contrasts unfavourably with the piety of Dissent the piety of Anglicanism, "which has ever been more dim and distant from the central light of souls." It was to this attack—so unmeasured in its arrogance that it would have stirred the passion of most men—that Pusey replied in "The Truth and Office of the English Church"—"a message of peace"—in which he set himself to show that the two Churches had more in common than the Romanist allowed, and also what were the real hindrances that held them apart. Other disputants—Newman, Frederick Oakeley, and T. W. Allies—were soon drawn into the battle.

In his review Dale traverses the whole field of controversy. He enforces Pusey's case against Rome; he turns Pusey's concessions to Rome against himself. Examining in detail the extent of agreement between Anglicanism and Romanism, he criticises and corrects

[1] *The British Quarterly Review*, April 1866, pp. 281-338.

Pusey's too friendly estimate. He shows that the two Churches differ in their conception of Justification, and in the number of the Sacraments that they respectively recognise, and to some extent at least in their doctrine of the Real Presence and the Eucharistic Sacrifice, though he admits that it is difficult to say how far the formularies of the English Church permit an honest clergyman to approach the Romish theory. Pusey's own teaching as to the Real Presence he confesses that he has never yet been able to construe intellectually. The true Roman theory of the Sacrament, and the true Protestant theory, he found intelligible; but the Anglo-Catholic theory, he says, "has defied every attempt we have made to apprehend it." His own teaching on the same subject was condemned in similar terms by hostile critics in after years.

In discussing the impediments that Pusey felt to stand in the way of reunion — impediments arising for the most part not out of authoritative doctrine, but from the practical system taught with a *quasi* authority, such as the infallibility of the Pope and the worship of the Virgin—he maintains Pusey's case against his adversaries, reinforcing his arguments and supplementing his evidence. His personal estimate of Newman and of Manning is conspicuous. It is with a touch of scorn that he tests the sinews of a logic which he had already described as "thin, wiry, and powerless," and that he overthrows Manning's exegesis of a passage in the First Epistle of St. John (ii. 20-27), which the Cardinal had manipulated to prove the infallibility of his church and the immutability of its doctrine. It is in a very different spirit that he repels Newman's attempt to show that the exaggerated homage rendered by some to the Virgin does not fairly represent the teaching and the thought of Rome, and to repudiate for his own part the distorted "devotion" while still clinging to the "truth." He accepts the disclaimer —for Newman and for others of like mould; he will not charge every member of the Roman Catholic Church with offering precisely the same adoration to Mary as to

Christ; but the doctrine of the Virgin, however harmless in elect souls through the Divine grace, must be among the commonalty of Christendom "a most fatal poison."

In a time of reaction from traditional hostility to Rome, when unreasoning prejudice had softened into sentimental regret, and when the errors and superstitions and crimes of the Papacy were too lightly forgotten, he regards Pusey's exposure of the "practical system" of the Roman Church as a substantial service to the cause of true Protestantism; no other man could have done the work so effectively. But at the same time, he asserts, Pusey had injured his own party by drawing attention to the method in which he and his followers interpreted the formularies of the English Church. The Tractarian movement had not spent itself; it had but passed from its early home into the land at large, to spread in great cities and in country parishes, to leaven our literature, to penetrate and to modify popular thought and feeling through their entire range, holding its own in spite of repression, ridicule, and reason. Its strength had been underestimated by Nonconformists as well as by others, and the Protestant faith of the country appeared to him seriously imperilled. But even in the heat of argument it may be seen how closely he is drawn in spirit to those against whose theology he is contending.

For ourselves, we cordially recognise the high and noble religious qualities which have been from the first the true life of the movement. In a restless, superficial, and worldly age, they have recalled the deeper devotion of the saints of former times. They have produced not only laborious scholars, but a vast number of zealous parish priests. They have built churches, established schools, and striven earnestly to rescue the outcasts of our modern civilisation from wretchedness and sin. Hanging on the skirts of the party, there is a "mixed multitude," like that which went up with the elect nation out of Egypt; men who are strangers to the true genius of the cause to which they have committed themselves, and are incapable of understanding the higher teaching of their own leaders—men who care more for decorated altar-cloths and lighted candles, symbolic vestments and picturesque prostrations, priestly mystery and the wondering

admiration of silly women, than for the traditions of ancient saintliness, and the dreams of a united Christendom, which thrill and awe the souls of their chiefs. Judged by this effeminate and ignoble crowd, the Anglo-Catholic party would deserve only contempt; judged by the higher and loftier spirits, from whose fervour and energy it sprung, it claims far different treatment.

And as in heart he is one with the men of faith and fervour, so too he insists on the Unity of Christendom, and repudiates the title of Separatist; though he cares nothing for union without unity. The confederation of the Roman, Greek, and Anglican Churches would be a calamity and no blessing: "the irrepressible impulses of the Christian heart are not destined to be satisfied by the creation of a visible spiritual empire, whose power would be fatal to the freedom and energy of the intellectual and moral life of mankind." Already the Church is one in worship, in morals, in the deepest elements of the spiritual life, and even in the great outlines of its creed. It is to the power of the Spirit within that we must trust to prevent all schism in the mystical Body of Christ, not to organisation, not to law.

In the following reminiscence Dale gives some account of the way in which he wrote; it helps to explain how it is that the article, though controversial, is not contentious:—

> While writing it, I talked it over with Dr. Oldknow, who was at that time Vicar of Holy Trinity, Bordesley. He was among the highest of High Churchmen, a Tractarian before the Tracts, and he had a wonderful collection of pamphlets on the Tractarian controversy. He lent me a copy of a letter of Mr. Dalgairns to the *Univers* which I referred to in my article. I had often heard of it, but had never been able to get sight of it. He told me that he picked it up on a second-hand book-stall in Padua. I had a great respect for him, and we often discussed, in the friendliest spirit, the ecclesiastical differences by which we were so widely separated.

The episode is characteristic. It was his habit to make the acquaintance of those from whom he differed, and the basis of intimacy was not suppression of opinion, but free and frank discussion. He desired not merely to understand the arguments of an opponent whom he

respected, and to give them their due weight, but to see his system of thought, so far as might be, from within, and as it presented itself to the mind of one who lived in it and by it. There were, however, some notable exceptions—some men of fine character whom he never understood. Dean Stanley was one of them. He admired Stanley's literary art, but was positively repelled by his personality, and perplexed by his colour-blindness in the domain of theology—by his absolute incapacity, as it seemed, to apprehend the most striking distinctions and shades of religious truth. He made more than one attempt in later life to get the better of this antipathy, regarding it as a sign of defective sympathy, but the effort was in vain.

The treatment of the Lord's Supper in the *British Quarterly* article showed clearly enough that Dale did not accept Zwingli's theory as an adequate representation of the nature and purpose of the Sacrament. In a series of papers contributed to the *Evangelical Magazine* shortly afterwards,[1] he expressly stated that the opinion then, and probably now, prevalent in most Nonconformist churches —that the Lord's Supper is a commemorative institution, and nothing more—entirely failed in his view to exhaust the meaning of the Ordinance. But in these papers, while he does not wholly avoid the discussion of theories, he does not contend for any special opinion. Even the Zwinglian doctrine is not assailed with any vigour; it is dismissed in half a dozen lines. He is content to concentrate attention on the institution itself with all its wealth of spiritual association and experience. He felt that if he could bring others to look upon the Sacrament in the light that he did, and to invest it with the same sanctity, the teaching of Zwingli would drop away from them of its own accord, as the withered leaves that winter has left fall with the new life stirred by the spring. But for the time it seemed enough to assert that we come to the Ordinance, not for self-examination, but to hold communion with Christ who instituted it; and that the

[1] *Evangelical Magazine*, January-December 1867.

symbolism of the Ordinance represents a permanent relation between Christ and those who trust in Him—a perpetual participation in the Divine Life, so that He becomes the life of our life, the sinew of our strength, the inexhaustible fountain of our joy. The conception is practically Calvin's, but as yet it is not worked out with the fulness that it afterwards assumed in the essay in *Ecclesia*,[1] and in Dale's maturer teaching on the subject.

Two articles on the Atonement published in the *British Quarterly* during the same period,[2] one on the "moral" theory—a "polemical and negative" review, as Dale described it—and another on the "expiatory" theory, more closely anticipated his subsequent lectures on the same subject, both in the criticism directed against the teaching of Dr. Bushnell and Dr. John Young, and also in the positive statement of his own position. The same weapons are used on both occasions to assail Dr. Bushnell's assertion that the Scriptures "exhibit no trace of expiation," and Dr. Young's conception of spiritual laws as self-acting, self-defending forces—"that exact, and continue to exact, so long as the evil remains, the amount of penalty, visible and invisible, to the veriest jot and tittle which the deed of violation demands." There is the same careful distinction between the fact of the Atonement and the theory of it—the fact stated by Christ Himself, the theory framed by philosophy. The analysis of the evidence for the fact contained in the New Testament, though curtailed in the articles, forecasts in method and even in detail the larger plan. Other elements are common both to the articles and the lectures, but it is not necessary to trace the resemblance. The differences, however, altogether apart from scale and scope, are not unimportant. In the *British Quarterly* articles the theory is summed up in four propositions:—

[1] *Ecclesia: Church Problems considered in a series of Essays*, edited by H. R. Reynolds, D.D., 1870: "The Doctrine of the Real Presence and the Lord's Supper," by R. W. Dale, pp. 315-390.

[2] *British Quarterly Review*: "The Moral Theory of the Atonement," October 1866, pp. 410-452; "The Expiatory Theory of the Atonement," October 1867, pp. 463-504.

(1) It is an Eternal and absolute law that sin deserves punishment. (2) It is the function of God as the Creator and Moral Ruler of the Universe to recognise this law. (3) The moral significance of Punishment inflicted on the sinful lies in its being the voluntary recognition by God Himself of the ill-desert of sin. (4) The surrender by the Eternal Father of the only begotten Son to penal suffering, and the Son's voluntary endurance of that suffering, constitute a Divine recognition of the ill-deserts of sin far transcending in moral sublimity the infliction of punishment on the guilty.[1]

In these propositions, it will be noticed, the relation of the Lord Jesus Christ to the human race—a truth on which great stress is laid in the lectures—is not considered; in fact, the only allusion to it is contained in a single sentence of a single paragraph.

The punishment of sin is a Divine act; and if sin is not punished, some other Divine act of at least equal moral intensity must take its place. Not the Dignity of Christ, *but His Position as the Moral Ruler of our race*, invests His agony and death with all their Atoning efficacy. For God to have inflicted the penalty of sin on any innocent creature, instead of being an act of homage to the Law, would have been a violation of its essential spirit. He chose to suffer rather than to punish.[2]

In the book the sentence in italics is developed into an entire lecture.

Another variation challenges notice. The relation of God to the Law of Righteousness, if similarly conceived, is differently expressed. In the *British Quarterly*, Dale is so eager to assert the principle that moral obligations are not derived from the Will of God, but are independent, necessary, and eternal, that his language may be taken to imply that God Himself no less than the creature is subject to the Law. He endorses Mill's declaration, and quotes Cudworth in support of it, that—"the only view of the connection between religion and morality which does not annihilate the very idea of the latter, is that which

[1] *British Quarterly Review*, "The Expiatory Theory of the Atonement, October 1867, pp. 502, 503.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 502.

considers the Deity as not making, but recognising and sanctioning, moral obligation."[1] "So far from the commands of God originating moral obligation, 'duty' is inconceivable if moral obligation does not exist antecedently to the Divine commands."[2] And again—"It is God's glory, not that His Will originated the Moral Law, but that His Will has uniformly honoured and asserted its authority."[3] The "Divine penalty which follows sin" is described as "an act of Divine homage to the eternal law that the wrong-doer deserves to suffer."[4] Such language —not without reason—was construed as attributing to Law an objective existence independent of God, and as placing God in subjection beneath it. So conceived, the relation of God to Law involved a dualism.[5] Dale admitted this criticism to be just, and in the lectures he avoided all danger of misconception. Or, if his earlier language was really used in the sense attributed to it, he modified his position—to the dudgeon of the collectors who had pinned him and placed him in a special compartment in their theological cabinet.

What then is the relation between God and the eternal Law of Righteousness? Are we to conceive of that Law as independent and supreme, claiming allegiance from the Creator as well as from His creatures? Is God Himself subject to its authority, even as we are? Is there a throne, even an ideal throne, loftier and more august than His? a sceptre, even an ideal sceptre, by which even He is governed, and which from eternity to eternity He obeys?

Such an hypothesis is instinctively rejected as untenable. God is not distinct from the Law but identical with it.

The relation between God and the eternal Law of Righteousness is, therefore, unique. He is not, as we are, bound by its authority; in Him its authority is actively asserted. To describe Him as doing homage to it—although a phrase which it may sometimes be almost necessary to employ—is by implication to

[1] J. S. Mill, *Dissertations*, vol. i. p. 125.
[2] *British Quarterly Review*, October 1867, p. 486.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 488. [4] *Ibid.* p. 489.
[5] D. W. Simon, *The Redemption of Man*, pp. 12 foll.

strip Him of His moral sovereignty: the homage which is due to the law is due to Him. The law does not claim Him as the most illustrious and glorious of its subjects; it is supreme in His supremacy. His relation to the law is not a relation of subjection but of identity. . . . In God the law is *alive;* it reigns on His throne, sways His sceptre, is crowned with His glory.[1]

A letter to Dr. Allon shows that Dale attached special importance to the second of the two articles. He begins with some advice intended to anticipate and disarm editorial criticism.

To the Rev. Henry Allon

27th August 1867.

Don't abuse the writing. It is better than you often get, and much better than you deserve. Don't abuse the length. If you knew of the innocent paragraphs which have been murdered for no fault of their own! It won't make even now more than 36 or 37 pages, and you said 32.

I have writen this article with much more solicitude than I felt about either of the other two, and it is the fruit of much more reading and thought. I cannot but hope that it may do something to help some of our men who are drifting. If you like this, you must let me do a couple of sheets next year on Justification.

As yet he was hardly known, except as a controversialist, beyond the limits of Nonconformity; but these articles and a collection of sermons—"Discourses on Special Occasions"—published in the spring of 1866, Aged 36. spread his reputation in other directions. The book met with a piece of singular good fortune. It was one of four reviewed in the *Contemporary* by the editor, Dean Alford, under the title of "Recent Nonconformist Sermons." In his article the Dean took occasion to draw attention to the character of Nonconformist preaching, illustrating his criticism by long extracts from the volumes before him, protesting at the same time against the unmerited neglect that Nonconformity and its work had experienced from

[1] *The Atonement*, pp. 370, 372.

his fellow churchmen. To Dale's book he gave the highest place. "It contains," he said,

> Some of the finest specimens of modern preaching. His earnest downright practical Christian morality is carried into the hearts and consciences of his hearers by words at the same time plain and yet weighty and rhetorical. He knows well how to embody that which is beautiful in glowing description, without anywhere running into exaggeration, or overstepping the bounds of pure taste.[1]

It was a generous tribute; and it meant more then that it would mean now. Nor did the Dean stop short at praising; he invited Dale to write for the *Contemporary*, offering him a wider audience than he could otherwise have reached. The same introduction opened the doors of the other periodicals also published by Mr. Strahan, *Good Words* and the *Sunday Magazine*, then edited by Norman Macleod and Dr. Guthrie respectively. It was a great lift, for such opportunities were comparatively few in those days; and Alford's kindness was one of the lasting memories of life.

Aged 38. Dale's first contribution to the *Contemporary*—it held the place of honour in the May number of 1868—was an article on Lacordaire, shaped, if not written, during a flying visit to Paris in the previous winter. It has been said that the best way of mastering a new subject is to lecture on it; and though this was not Dale's method, it is clear that when he wrote on Lacordaire his knowledge of the French pulpit was less intimate than it afterwards became. The article is almost entirely a study of method. The criticism is practical rather than literary. There is no breadth of outlook—no attempt to appreciate resemblances or distinctions between Lacordaire and his rivals in fame. For such a task he was not yet equipped. In after years, when enriched by study and ripened by experience, he sometimes spoke of writing a series of such studies,—studies of Bossuet and Bourdaloue, Massillon, Gratry, and Ravignan, and other masters of sacred

[1] "Recent Nonconformist Sermons," *Contemporary Review*, July 1866.

eloquence; but this was one of many plans that never came to fulfilment.

In the papers contributed to *Good Words* and the *Sunday Magazine*, several of which were collected in his *Weekday Sermons*, Dale broke new ground; they were his first distinct utterance as an ethical teacher outside his own pulpit. He had already been brought to recognise the necessity of an ethical revival. The religious life of many Christians he knew to be impoverished by imperfect conceptions of moral duty, and enfeebled by disregard of duty that they recognised. He could admit no divorce between creed and conduct. He regarded as one of the chief defects of the Evangelical Revival its failure to afford a lofty ideal of practical righteousness, and a healthy vigorous moral training.[1] And such failures and shortcomings, while injurious to spiritual strength and soundness, armed unbelief with the deadliest of weapons.

If Christian men are not actually controlled in their common life by all that they profess to believe; if their worship has no effect upon their common work, they are contributing more powerfully to the temporary triumph of scepticism than the writers who are most hostile to religious truth. The wonderful story of the Incarnation,—it is we who are making it incredible, if we are not manifestly trying to live a nobler life than those who deny it. The authority of God,—it is we who are teaching men that there is nothing in it, if we are not afraid to sin against Him.

His choice of subjects, and his treatment of them, was representative rather than systematic. It was not in his plan to write a treatise on ethics; but taking elements of character and aspects of life, as they occurred to his mind, he endeavoured to show their relation to the supreme law of life, asserting the sovereignty of Christ—as a real and not a titular supremacy—over the whole range of human interest and activity. Sometimes he had to correct the obliquities of the moral balance; sometimes to lay bare and to recut a truth obliterated by convention

[1] *The Evangelical Revival*, p. 48.

or neglect; more often to interpret the significance of things regarded as trivial and of little weight. He insisted then, as he insisted afterwards, on "the use of the understanding in keeping God's law"; in "Talebearing" and "Unwholesome Words" he dwelt on the perils of speech; he had something to say about "Cheerfulness" as a duty, and something about "Anger" as a sin; about "The kindly treatment of other men's imperfections"; about "The discipline of the body," "The perils and uses of rich men"; about "Amusements," "Summer holidays," and "Christmas parties." He came to close quarters with the common problems of common life.

In depth and in force, indeed, these earlier utterances cannot compare with the work of later years; and when, as often happened, he said again to a younger generation what he had said before—for he was never afraid of repeating himself—there were touches and changes that made it all seem new. But the principles and the qualities that came to be associated with his moral teaching may easily be recognised, and his system of ethical thought, in its broad outlines, is already there. The conception of morality as a positive force, leading to action rather than abstention; the delight in robust and strenuous virtue, in the glow of life as against the gray, and his repugnance to the neutral tints of character; the preference for whatever braces human nature to manliness, and for all that cultivates simplicity, purpose, and constancy in the religious life,—all these elements are unmistakably predominant.

The bent of his nature is shown in another piece of work which he took in hand about this time. He knew well that a hymn—especially when it has grown familiar by use—affects the mass of men far more deeply than a sermon, and that a true Christian manliness will not be achieved while the mind pulls one way and the emotions pull another. Dissatisfied with the collections of hymns then existing, he determined to compile a volume for himself, which should represent the characteristic type of English piety, as he conceived it, and should preserve the

national strain of faith and feeling: it was to be essentially the "English Hymn Book."

The task was one in which he found genuine enjoyment. The labour of search and selection was not irksome. The enterprise brought him into pleasant relations with many men of different Churches, whom he rejoiced to meet on the ground of common sympathy. Among living hymn-writers, Mr. Thomas Hornblower Gill attracted him by far the most strongly. He found his *Golden Chain of Praise* a very mine of wealth; and the author allowed him to draw on it freely. The first of the following letters was written on receipt of Mr. Gill's book.

To Mr. T. H. Gill

27th January 1869.

I had resolved to write to you because I wanted to thank you for the book with all my heart. For several years I have felt the want of new hymns very strongly. At the beginning of the present year I exchanged some letters with Gerald Moultrie, who happened to have seen a note of mine in which modern hymns were rather roughly criticised, and who wrote to me to learn more fully what my views were on hymnology in general. The complaint I make is that the hymns which have been written for the last quarter of a century have no faith, or hope, or joy in them; they are all tears and sighs; they might have been written by people who never heard of the liberty with which Christ has made His people free. Moreover, they are singularly restricted in their subjects. They are mostly about Heaven, or about the human side of our Lord's character and life, and in both cases are miserably sentimental. They are women's hymns rather than men's hymns; and they are the hymns of very weak hysterical women too. Those about our Lord are written in the style in which Romanists write about their saints; there is hardly ever any vision of the glory and majesty which shine through all His sufferings and shame. They excite pity for Christ rather than reverence. Indeed they might have been written by men, or rather by women, who had never heard that He was risen from the dead. I think I told Mr. Moultrie that I hardly knew of any better service that could be rendered to the Church just now than writing a score of hymns inspired with the spirit of the *Te Deum*. Your book contains—as it seems to me—at least a score of hymns, and I think con-

siderably more, in which that spirit breathes and burns. I wanted, therefore, to write and thank you. But this was not all. For some time I have been dreaming of making a collection of hymns for the use of my own people, and have been discouraged chiefly by the difficulty of finding the kind I want. Your book is a perfect treasure, and I wanted to ask you how many your generosity would permit me to use in the event of my being able to carry out my purpose.

I have gone on ticking off one after another, till I am afraid to count how many I covet.

May I be forgiven if I add that I should have ticked off considerably more but for the dissonance I am conscious of between the idea of a "Lover" and the idea both of Christ in relation to His Church and of the Church in relation to Him?

I don't know that I can fully explain my feeling, but you may perhaps understand it if I say that—

(1) I hesitate to call Christ the Lover of His Church, because a lover regards the woman to whom he is devoted with a reverential affection such as Christ can hardly feel for His Church, even when contemplated, as the Platonists would say, in its Idea. A lover feels that he is of the earth and that the object of his devotion is divine. I cannot think of a lover as being simply one who loves, but as being one whose love is of a certain type.

(2) On the other hand, I cannot think of the Church as the lover of Christ; because the relation of man to woman in its most ideal form is not the relation of the soul to its Redeemer. The lover, whatever his consciousness of inferiority, has the consciousness of superior strength: he protects while he adores. You may suggest that in Scripture we have the symbol of the relations between husband and wife constantly used to represent the relation between God and ourselves; this may be alleged in support of the habit of calling Christ our Lover, not in support of calling ourselves His lovers; and yet it hardly holds. The associations—and these are everything in poetry—connected with the word husband are altogether dissimilar from those connected with the word lover. Now I cannot get rid of those latter when I find Christ called a lover. A lover is more than one who loves. Will you excuse this dissertation? I did not mean to get into it when I began to write.

As the work went on, difficulties arose. In some of his friend's finest hymns there were phrases and expressions which Dale felt to be awkward, and in some cases unnatural or worse; an editor—so it seemed to him—without trespassing beyond his province, might omit or

amend. Such a claim the living poet was bound to resist —the dead were helpless; and Mr. Gill protested with vigour. The question was fought out at length, with concessions on both sides. The letter in which Dale states his theory of editorial duties or rights—call them which we will — is incomplete, but it is easy to supply what is missing.

To Mr. T. H. Gill

[An editor may and should amend not only the obvious errors of the press, but also words and phrases] which are flaws in the perfectness of the work, inaccuracies which are indisputably the result of imperfect acquaintance with the idiom of the language. Again, accidental associations with a word sometimes invest it with a glory to one man which it cannot have to any one else in the world, and it seems to me a perversity to say that because it has somehow become touched with a grace and a splendour for himself which no one else recognises, and which no one else can ever recognise, the word is therefore the truest expression of his thought. It does not express the thought at all; and another man may see where the failure lies and by a slight change may secure for the thought the voice and music which it had never had before. Can you not imagine—to take an extreme case—that a word which a father has heard from the lips of a child he has lost may have for him a beauty and tenderness which no one besides may see in it? The father might say, that for his own sake—for the sake of the associations with it—he wants that word to stand in his most finished and perfect piece of work; and if this is the ground on which he keeps it there, his position is intelligible. But if he says, the word is the exactest expression of my thought, the reply is obvious: to you it may be indissolubly associated with the thought, but to others it is bare of everything that invests it with significance and power. I need not apply my illustration.

But if your principle were sound, I should contest its pertinence.

A hymn is to be the expression of what a congregation feels, or, if you like, of what it ought to feel. It may well happen that you may utter your thought in the most admirable manner in which it can be uttered, and that, when I am asked to utter it, I may say, and say with justice, "I can't utter it just so." We must speak as well as hear in our own tongue the wonderful

works of God. One man may be able to express his very deepest thought of God's tenderness in the old Hebrew way, and may sing "His bowels melt with love"; but the Hebrew way is not mine: it may be just as good as the English way—it may be better; but to me it is an impossible way. I can speak of God's heart—though in the nature of things there is no more reason why I should speak of God's "heart" than of His "bowels"; and the time may come—or perhaps in other countries the time has come already—when the "heart" may be as offensive to many people as "bowels" are to me; however this may be, I can speak of the one, not of the other. Now I feel that it would be simply—well, I don't want to use a hard word, and so I will say—irrational, not to change "bowels" into something else if it occurred in a hymn which on the whole is a noble expression of reverence and love and trust. What I mean is, that the best in itself may be the impossible to ninety-nine men out of a hundred. When a poet writes a hymn, he writes something for other people to sing as well as himself: he must write German for Germans, Arabic for Arabs, and the kind of English possible to ordinary English people if he writes for them. When by any accident there is a word or phrase in his hymn which to ordinary English people is as unnatural or unintelligible as Chinese to an Irishman—I am not now intending to say that you ever get as far astray as this extravagant comparison implies —I think that a man who could no more write a hymn than he could fly, may mend it. I can manage to translate an ode of Horace's though I could never have written one; and, by the way, your principles would, as it seems to me, forbid translations altogether, and require us to sing David's Psalms in Hebrew.

The following letters explain themselves:—

To Mr. T. H. Gill

6th May 1869.

My Hymn Book project has been seriously threatened. Some of my friends are very anxious for me to take the Chair of Dogmatic Theology and Philosophy at Spring Hill. This would involve the giving up of Carr's Lane, and, with no congregation of my own, it would be a great risk to publish a hymn book. However, I hope the danger is past.

1st November 1880.

I wish you understood music; if you did, I am sure that in your next edition you would make some slight modification. It

would be useless to renew our old controversy about some antique expressions which I think mar the perfection of your verses occasionally; but the laws of verse written for singing are so definite that I am sure you would make an occasional change if you considered them. A poet may vary his accented syllables and so add to the beauty of his lines; but a true lyrist remembers that musical accent is imperious and recognises its authority. Occasionally you allow a strong musical accent to fall on such a word as "the," which is practically no word at all, and you cannot imagine what a shock this gives. I care so much for your hymns, and believe that they have so much in them to ennoble the religious life of our churches, that I am troubled by everything that checks their use.

And let me add a menace! You may assume it as absolutely certain that if you do not do homage to musical necessities in your lifetime, innumerable editors will mangle you after your death. Men *will* sing your hymns and will change them at their own fancy to make them "singable." Will not this frighten you?

31st January 1881.

Experience is wasted on me. I kept your letter hoping to write a long answer; and now, having already written just twelve letters this morning, it is quite certain that a long letter is impossible. I think I must have failed—indeed I am sure I failed—to make my meaning clear in my last. I never challenged the music of the verses, but their adaptation to music. What reads perfectly may sing badly. The illustration I selected you missed through my bad hand-writing. It was from the verse—

I would not with swift-wingèd zeal
On the world's errands go, etc.

When this verse is read there is no need to let the accent fall on *the:* the two first syllables are read short; but when they are sung, the accent strikes with full force on the article, and the effect is, I need not say, very unfortunate. I think that your hymns have the genuine lyrical passion in them, and all I suggest is, that it is a thousand pities that you should not, in revising them, make such changes in them as will remove the occasional difficulty in the way of singing them.

You are right and wrong in saying that no superficial faults ever hurt anything really good: right, for the "faults," if I may presume to call them so, do not interfere with the private reading and enjoyment of the hymns; wrong, for they do interfere, more or less, with their being sung. For myself, I feel that to

give people hymns to sing is one of the noblest services which a man can render to the Church. The hymns of yours which we are constantly singing have, I believe, greatly contributed to the force and joy of the church at Carr's Lane; and it is a real trouble to me that we cannot sing more of them, and that occasionally in those we do sing there comes a line which will not run pleasantly with any possible tune; or a word which practically belongs to a foreign language, so far as very many of those are concerned who enter most fully into the thought and passion of even your best achievements. Now, my dear fellow, I have got it off my conscience. I have been "faithful," as people say, and that means "unpleasant." Bear with me for I love you.

After many interruptions and long delay the book was finished and came into use at Carr's Lane. It bears obvious traces of the conditions under which it was produced, and of the editor's methods. There are changes that cannot easily be justified from the literary point of view, and the lines that have been modified are not severally indicated. In too many cases the hymn as printed has been taken from some other collection without comparison with the original. In short, it is the work of an over-busy man devoid of the lyric strain; serviceable for its special purpose, and interesting as a monument of character, but wanting in finish and in art.

CHAPTER X

THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE UNION

The Congregational Union—Dale elected Chairman—Addresses from the Chair: "Christ and the Controversies of Christendom"; "The Holy Spirit in relation to the Ministry, the Worship, and the Work of the Church"—The title "Reverend"—Death of his father—Union Sermon at Swansea: "The Communion of Saints"—The Presence of Christ in the Church—The basis of Congregationalism.

THE Congregational system is not sufficiently organic to admit any amplitude of official distinctions; indeed, strictly speaking, it has no official distinctions at all. A Congregational church is independent—free from external control, admitting its own members, electing its own pastor, enforcing its own rule of discipline. Even the colleges for the education of the ministry are subject to no central authority; each has its special constituency and its separate committee. The only denominational recognition of eminence and service is afforded by the Congregational Union, which stands in a somewhat peculiar relation to the churches included in it. Its origin is comparatively recent, dating back only as far as the year 1831; so that it cannot be regarded as in any way essential to the genius of Congregationalism. The Union is a voluntary association: no Congregational church is bound to join it. It possesses no such powers as belong to the General Assembly of Presbyterianism or to the Wesleyan Conference. It has no title to legislate for Congregationalism as a whole: its constitution expressly provides that it shall not serve as a court of appeal. Its functions are humbler and more restricted—to provide

opportunity for consultation, to strengthen fraternal relations between the churches of its own order, and to facilitate such combined action as may occasionally be deemed advisable. Destitute of constitutional prerogative, it claims no authority in matters of faith. The unanimous vote of its members could not depose the pastor of the humblest village church; neither could it require subscription to any dogma from a solitary believer. Two years after its formation, and once again in 1878, the Union by "declaration" or resolution has stated in general terms the theological position of its members; but the distinction between such a Confession and a Creed has always been kept in view, and a Confession of Faith has never been turned by the application of force or constraint into what the Savoy Declaration describes as "exactions and impositions of Faith."

Modern as it is, however, and in spite of all limitations, the institution has been of service, and it has taken firm root: very few Congregational churches are outside it. Its discussions have helped to mould the thought of the churches; their policy in many directions has been guided by its decisions. The Chairmanship—an annual appointment—is the highest honour that the Union can confer, and the office of preacher at the autumnal session is also invested with special distinction. Dale was elected to the Chair for the year 1869, and preached the sermon at Swansea in 1871—reversing the usual order. He must have been almost the youngest Chairman that the Union has had, and the choice of a man not yet forty was a tribute of no common respect.

These three utterances—the two addresses from the Chair at the spring and autumn sessions, and the sermon—may well stand together, as representing the substance of his teaching at that time; they also mark a period of transition in his theological thought, during which the centre of interest began to shift from one great truth to another. One of his later letters recalls the rapture that came to him with "the discovery that Christ was alive"; for weeks, he says, he could think of nothing else, could

preach about nothing else. The first fervour abated, but to the end of his ministry the thought of the *Living Christ* remained dominant over him, and in the first of his two addresses from the Chair its influence was visibly supreme.

When he spoke the whole outlook was dark and stormy. Discontent was gathering its forces for an Aged 39. onslaught on the social and political order. Rome was beginning to reassert its claims with unwonted vigour and assurance; English Protestantism was assailed from within as well as from without. The revolt of criticism against the authority of revelation had culminated in a contemptuous rejection of the supernatural element in religion. It was a time of conflict and unrest, and he chose for his theme "Christ and the Controversies of Christendom."

While acknowledging that the problems of the day should not be ignored, and that opponents on occasion must be met in open conflict—confronted on their own ground and combated with their own weapons — he asserted that by "preaching Christ" the Christian ministry would best discharge its duty to this dark and troubled age. The world had not grown weary of Him yet; the eagerness with which it had welcomed Renan's *Vie de Jésus*—notwithstanding its fantastic distortion—and the solemn scrutiny of *Ecce Homo*, placed this beyond doubt. But it was of Christ Himself that men must speak; description of scenery, discussion of subsidiary details, the amplification of isolated precepts or of fragmentary thoughts, would be of no effect. The actual story of His Life and Death, the presentation of His Personality, the interpretation of His Character,—on these and on no inferior forces must the Church rely in its struggle with unbelief. Christ must be suffered to speak for Himself—to bear witness of Himself. In the struggle with unbelief, and in all the controversies to which the Church is committed, this will prove the surest method. Neither in morals nor in religion are our convictions determined by intellectual processes alone. Our conception of duty rests on foundations less precarious than proofs which appeal

to the mind. Men believe in God, not because His existence has been demonstrated to them, but because they cannot help believing; "their faith is the act, not of the logical understanding, but of the Higher Reason."

If this be so, is it not reasonable to suppose that a Divine revelation will appeal immediately to the same regal faculty of our nature? When God is silent, the soul is sure that He is near; when He speaks, will it not recognise His voice? When God is invisible, the soul affirms His majesty and glory; when He personally appears, will it not instinctively adore? Of all the innumerable saints who have trusted in Christ for salvation, how many could have given a demonstration of the reasonableness of their faith? They believed, not because they were critics and scholars, but because to all the higher faculties of their nature the revelation of God in Christ was irresistible. They did not ask for proof; proof was unnecessary. "We have seen Him ourselves"—to see Him was enough—"and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."[1]

Similarly the revelation of the Person of Christ will crush and expel the prejudice against the miraculous. It is not by argument that the mass of men have been led to reject the miraculous. They have been led to do so by a general tendency of thought, not by any specific process of reasoning. Historical evidence, however strong, will not touch men. Their reluctance to admit the possibility of miracles does not depend on evidence, and no evidence can remove it. The one way of dealing with such minds is so to "preach Christ, that the strong bias against miracles in general shall be overborne and subdued by a passionate longing to believe in Him."

So again with the philosophy of Comte, which abandons as insoluble all inquiries relating to the invisible and eternal. Men are Positivists, not because Comte has demonstrated that the philosophy of the past deals with problems lying beyond the range of human faculties, but because they have lost heart and courage for such explorations. How can this indifference be dispelled and this self-abasement remedied?

[1] *Christ and the Controversies of Christendom*, p. 15.

If, as M. Comte admirably says, the loftiest aim of all the sciences is not to minister to the arts of life, but to satisfy the fundamental necessity of the intellect to know the laws of phenomena, we must try to quicken and to intensify that nobler necessity which has impelled men in all countries and in all ages to pursue with restless and agonising earnestness a still deeper knowledge. We must try to unchain the thoughts which were wont to wander through eternity, but which are now imprisoned within the narrow walls of the physical sciences. We must discover how the higher nature of man can be roused from that fatal sleep which has made him indifferent to his origin, to his present relations to the invisible world, and to his destiny beyond the grave. The moral and spiritual faculties must be appealed to. The conscience must be awakened. The heart must be touched. And I know not how we can do this so well as by telling the story of God manifest in the flesh.[1]

The same method was prescribed in the controversy with Rome. Keenly alive to the importance of the questions at issue between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, Dale was not one of those who can see nothing but superstition and corruption in that ancient church; to slight or to scorn it he regarded as possible only to ignorance or presumption. He knew how much might be said—how much had been said—on either side of the case, and he had escaped from the delusion that the principles of Protestantism must necessarily carry conviction to the heart of any fair-minded Romanist. Reason alone and unaided would never prevail. Elaborate arguments directed to prove the great doctrine of Justification by Faith, experience had shown, would have little efficacy; habit and use would soon efface the impression of the moment. If the truth were ever to be apprehended by those who now rejected it, that could be only through a new and vivid realisation of all that was involved in the Death on the Cross. That had transformed Luther; it might transform others also. In the same way he approached the controversies that surround the Priesthood and the Eucharist. To combat false doctrine with mere negations was futile; in what way, he asked himself, does the teaching

[1] *Christ and the Controversies of Christendom*, pp. 18, 19.

of Rome respond to the demands of human nature? What are the instincts, the emotions to which it appeals?

The Priesthood owes its power to the fact that men will always trust a living priest rather than a "method of salvation," or a set of theological propositions printed in a book. Transubstantiation, too, brings the believer to a Person, not to a ceremony. In the Eucharist he is assured that Christ is personally present; and it is the personal presence of its Redeemer for which the soul craves.

The real strength of the theory of Transubstantiation and the theory of the Real Presence lies in the impression of multitudes of men, that if they surrender their faith in the awful mystery of the Eucharist, Christ will seem no longer near to them. If He is not present in a supernatural way on the altar, they think that they must lose Him altogether; and they are accustomed to speak about our own service as a mere "commemoration of an absent Lord." The exigencies of the spirit are more imperious than the exigencies of the intellect. No logic can master the craving of the soul for Christ. We must satisfy the craving, or the error will not be renounced. We must preach Christ—the living Christ—till men shall feel that He is so near to them that the intervention of the priest is an impertinence and an affront. We must preach Christ—the living Christ—till men shall feel that He is near to them always and everywhere, and that His alleged union with the consecrated elements is rather a hindrance than a help to faith.[1]

The same principle received a further application in ecclesiastical controversy. In discussing questions of church order and government, it must not be forgotten that Christian Churches exist by the will of Christ; that they are not "the artificial creations of human sagacity or political laws"; that the Spirit of Christ dwells in their true members; that He is their living Ruler and Head.

Christ, the living Christ, is the Ruler and Head of the Church. There is scarcely an argument which is urged in support of national ecclesiastical establishments which is not paralysed by that solitary truth. Nearly every plea for a State Church derives its force from the disposition of men to think of the Church as being nothing more than a great human organisation for maintaining Christian learning and propagating religious

[1] *Christ and the Controversies of Christendom*, pp. 26, 27.

truth, or for civilising mankind and improving the morality of nations. Let Christ be revealed as the actual King of the Church, and nearly all the arguments for ecclesiastical establishments are answered. Try whether it is possible to state the case to Him.

Will any one venture to say to Christ, There is not love enough in the hearts of Thy friends to bear the expenses of maintaining Thy worship and of preaching Thy Gospel; the cost is heavy; they will not, or they cannot bear it; but we will use our political power to compel the unwilling to take their share of the burden? Yet this is one of the chief arguments for a national establishment.

Or will any one say to Christ, Thy servants in whom Thy Spirit dwells are fanatical and unjust; if the government of the Church is left to them, they will be guilty of tyranny, and no freedom will be left for those to whom Thou art revealing Truth which Thy Church has not yet received or understood; it will be better to remit all questions concerning the character and doctrine of the pastors of Thy Church to men, who, though they may not be taught of Thee, are familiar with human laws, and who, though they may have no love for Thyself, love justice and liberty better than Thy most ardent friends; whether Judas shall continue an Apostle is likely to be determined unjustly by his brethren; it will be safer to consult Pilate or to appeal to Cæsar? Yet this is one of the chief arguments for a national establishment.

Arguments which are gravely urged by statesmen in the House of Commons, no man would be profane enough to address to Christ. Address them to Him, and they require no reply.[1]

Pursuing the same line of treatment, he went on to deal with the social problems—the estrangement of class from class, the antagonism between labour and capital, the ignorance, the poverty, and the vice that we have received in entail from the past. To follow out the argument in detail would be superfluous, but one point should be noticed: an emphatic declaration that the time had come to establish a national system of education was received by the majority of the audience with great enthusiasm.

Every morning and every night our people pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Let us make them under-

[1] *Christ and the Controversies of Christendom*, pp. 36, 37.

stand that it is not Christ's Will that thousands of English children should grow up without the most elementary rudiments of education; and, since this is a region in which the Will of Christ may be enforced by human law, let us ask them in His name to throw around every child that is born into the country an inviolable protection against the carelessness or stupidity, or covetousness or necessity of its parents, and defend, so far as we can, with all the authority and power of the State, the child's right to receive the education which the Will of Christ requires to be given to it.[1]

For most men the night before the address is more trying than the morning of its delivery: such, at any rate, was Dale's experience; the presence of the assembly and the associations of the meeting-place stimulate and sustain. But in his case the strain was relieved by the kindly thought of Dr. Allon, whose guest he was during the week. Allon had purposely kept the evening free that he might hear the address read aloud in his own study, and might help with criticism or suggestion. It was an act of characteristic sympathy, and the self-possession and ease with which Dale discharged his task next day—after the first sentence his voice never faltered—were largely due to the generous encouragement of his friend.

The address at the autumnal session held at Wolverhampton, on "The Holy Spirit in relation to the Ministry, the Worship, and the Work of the Church," was on different lines.[2] It was a protest against undue reliance on mechanical methods for spiritual ends, and a plea for a larger freedom of spiritual energy. Dealing with definite questions by which the Congregational churches were then agitated or divided, as it excited strong enthusiasm so it also provoked some vigorous criticism.

Much was misinterpreted, misconstrued. Some, for the second time, detected Romish proclivities in an expression of admiration for the courage with which the Œcumenical Council, lately convened, was preparing to confront the revolt of Europe and to reassert the supremacy of the

[1] *Christ and the Controversies of Christendom*, p. 44.

[2] *The Holy Spirit in relation to the Ministry, the Worship, and the Work of the Church.* London, 1869.

Church throughout the entire domain of thought and knowledge; "moral grandeur," in any shape or form, they refused to attribute to a system which they both hated and feared. Other portions of the address encountered more serious disapproval. In discussing the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Work of the Church, Dale drew a broad distinction between the "restless activity" by which our age is characterised, and the spirit of early Christianity. The modern Church scatters its labourers and its literature broadcast through the world. While it maintains a vast organisation of official workers, it strenuously asserts the necessity of individual effort, demanding that every Christian man shall take his part in the great enterprise of seeking and saving the lost. The duty is confessed even when it is not discharged. And yet in the New Testament it is difficult to discover any direct precept in which this obligation is imposed on all Christian men. How can we account for an omission that cannot be accidental? How explain a silence so startling?

The explanation is simple. We ought to do our utmost to save men from sin and eternal death; "but if we attempt to save them only because we ought, we shall most certainly fail." Like Christ Himself, when He came down to earth to redeem our race, we must be "moved, not by conscience, but by compassion." It is as true in relation to Christian work as to the Christian life that "we are not under law, but under grace." The authority of conscience, alone and unaided, will never create in the Church the zeal and the energy necessary for the salvation of the world. "We, too, whether ministers or unofficial members of the Church, if we are to preach the gospel as Christ preached it, must preach, not because we ought, but because we must." To create this divine passion, "Law is powerless; it is a supernatural gift."

The speaker's intention should surely have been intelligible to all; but it was misapprehended not only by some of those who listened, but by some who read. He was represented—and evidently without conscious unfairness—as denying our personal responsibility for the

salvation of others, and as seeking to deaden the conscience to a supreme duty.

What he had to say about Worship passed without challenge—an unusual experience; for as a rule contention most readily arises out of matters of ritual which appeal to all than out of doctrines or principles which are grasped only by the few. The principle that he upheld was the spiritual nature of the great acts of prayer and praise: in prayer it is the Spirit that "helpeth our infirmities"; in thanksgiving we are filled with "the joy of the Holy Ghost." But even in our rapture and our reverence it is necessary to guard against a spurious and unspiritual emotion, produced by inferior and merely natural agencies.

The problem to be solved by those who are interested in the æsthetics of public worship is singularly delicate. They have to consider how they can secure perfect freedom for the highest activities of our spiritual nature; but they must not attempt to stimulate and intensify these activities. Reverential awe, peaceful trust, the fervour of love, the exultation of hope, can be created only by the Holy Ghost; all that Art can do is to provide for these supernatural affections a just and adequate expression. It may provide the instrument for the Divine hand, but must not attempt itself to strike the chords. Physical restlessness may be soothed, and the gloom of physical depression may be driven away by its spell; it may cast out the "evil spirit" which sometimes takes possession of us; but when this is done, it must leave the soul vacant for a diviner guest, and its own voice must not be heard in the temple. The true solution of this problem will vary with the varying culture of the Church and the varying temperament of nations; but I am Puritan enough to believe that the higher life suffers infinitely less from those forms of service in which there is neither beauty, nobleness, nor pathos, than from those which in themselves are so rich, so stately, and so pathetic that they excite, even in the undevout, emotions which are easily mistaken for the sorrows of a supernatural penitence and the triumph of a supernatural joy.[1]

The spirit of prayer, no less than the spirit of thanksgiving, must come from the Holy Ghost. Changes in the arrangement and order of service may be advisable; but change will never give us the power we need.

[1] *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 34, 35.

When we have abandoned as wearisome that "long prayer" which was consecrated by the usage of two centuries, it is not certain that our shorter prayers will be offered with more faith and fervour; and in a few years our churches and congregations may become weary of them too. When these in their turn are abandoned, we may weave into beautiful liturgies the words in which the saints of other ages and of other lands confessed sin, and sought Divine light and strength and peace for themselves and all mankind; but we shall find that the words of saints will not always inspire saintly devotion. We shall never be able, by any artifices of liturgical arrangement, or by any beauty of devotional thought, to charm the impenitent into a sorrowful confession of sin, or the undevout into reverential worship.

In our public prayer we must think less than we have been accustomed to think of the taste, the criticism, the impatience of men who do not pray. In the presence of the awful perils from which we ask to be redeemed, of the infinite blessings we desire to obtain, and of the bright perfections we adore, we must not be troubled by the indifference and the weariness of those to whom these transcendent terrors and glories are all unreal. When we pray, our great design is not to move men, but to move God; and if we fail to do that, we fail altogether.[1]

In dealing with the Ministry of the Church Dale took a line that must have been quite unexpected. Dwelling on the supernatural qualifications required for an effective ministry—qualifications that no human effort can secure, though they may be cultivated and developed—he asserted that while the Church can never dispense with its scholars and thinkers, it is inclined to attach an exaggerated and almost superstitious importance to academic training, and that to pass all men, however diverse in earlier training and natural gifts, through the same mill is irrational and perverse. Colleges, he said, "are for men who are capable of becoming scholars"; but are the supernatural gifts required for the ministry never imparted to those who are not? May not the divine call come to a man after he is married, when it is practically impossible for him to become a student?

Among us is the certificate of a college committee to be invested with the same mysterious importance that belongs to

[1] *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 37, 38.

episcopal ordination in some other Christian Churches? Is it necessary to the validity of our orders? Is any symbol of inferiority to be branded on the men who do not happen to possess it?[1]

While pleading for larger freedom in this direction, he also desired to see evangelists rising up among the working classes, familiar with the daily experience of those to whom they appealed, and professional men or men of business prepared to give a part of their time to the duties of the pastorate. Many of these found leisure to undertake public service in many forms; why not this higher service also, when they possessed the requisite gifts?

It is one of the evil traditions which we have received from ecclesiastical communities, founded on principles which are altogether different from our own, that no man can become a minister, and yet "abide in the same calling wherein he was called." It seems to be supposed that the boast of the great Apostle, "These hands have ministered to my necessities," would be the shame and dishonour of a modern pastor. It is this which lies at the root of many, though not of all, the evils against which we are maintaining a feeble and ineffectual struggle by ignominious ministerial charities, and by schemes for the augmentation of ministerial incomes. It lies at the root of graver evils. It restrains the free action of the Spirit of God; the fire which He kindles is quenched; the call which He gives is resisted; and He is grieved by the exclusion from the highest forms of Christian service of men on whom He has conferred the richest grace and the noblest gifts. We "make void" the promises of God and our own faith through our "traditions."[2]

In advocating such a departure from the common practice of Congregationalism, he did not assume that this method would ever supplant the normal system of the pastorate. Had it been possible, he would not have wished it. And he was well aware that while few men are capable of combining two such opposite sets of duties, still fewer congregations are content with teaching and oversight that engage only a man's leisure. All that he sought or hoped for was that the arrangement might be accepted as an occasional resource in the case of weaker

[1] *The Holy Spirit*, p. 20. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 24, 25.

churches. His appeal, however, was construed as an attack upon the ministerial office. He was accused of a tendency to "Brethrenism," which saps the authority and overthrows the responsibility of the pastorate; of seeking to exalt ignorance and fanaticism, and of disparaging the necessity and even the value of ministerial education—a charge singularly inconsistent with his zeal for Spring Hill College and his passion for theology.

He knew that he had been treading on dangerous ground, and that his utterances would not command anything like a unanimous assent. In his closing words he acknowledged that he had criticised very freely some of the traditions of Congregationalism, and some of its tendencies which he regarded as injurious. But he offered no apology. "I believe," he said, "that you will never tolerate in this chair a man who shrinks from using the prerogative of perfect freedom of speech. Without that this honourable position would lose all its worth, and to accept the distinction would be to submit to degradation." The words went home. However divided in opinion, the assembly recognised the candour and the courage of its Chairman, and in place of the customary vote of thanks it was decided that every delegate should be supplied with a copy of the address, that it might be read, in whole or in part, to the church that he represented; such a compliment was then, probably, without precedent.

In much of what he said about the ministry, Dale must have had a particular case in his mind, though he did not allude to it. Not long before, he had taken part in the opening services of a new church at Saltley, one of the outlying districts of the town. Its history was exceptional. A friend of his—Mr. Ingall, an architect—had gathered about him a congregation of working people for whom he had conducted regular worship in a hired room; then they had built a place of worship for themselves at their own cost, and Mr. Ingall had become their pastor, while still continuing in his profession. Dale was keenly interested in the experiment, and rejoiced in its success.

At all times he asserted Mr. Ingall's right to recognition

as a minister, and vigorously repelled any attempt to impeach it. St. Paul himself, he argued, was a tent-maker: "Why should the construction of more permanent buildings interfere with the validity of spiritual acts, when the construction of goat's-hair tents left the apostolic power altogether untouched?" He had already abandoned the garb of his profession—the white tie and the conventional black coat. Now, in his unwillingness to separate his position from that of his friend, he discarded the title of "Reverend," which he saw would inevitably preserve an artificial distinction between the ministers of one type and those of the other. The title itself seemed to him unwarrantable, as claiming exceptional consideration and authority in spiritual things, and injurious, as implying a double standard of personal sanctity for the laity and the clergy. Every Christian he held to be in the truest sense a priest; all were on the same footing before God, whatever their calling, and subject to the same law of perfection. He felt strongly about the matter, and his feeling grew stronger with years. To the end of his life he was never with his own consent described as "Reverend"; and he took some pains to make his wish known. In Birmingham his action led to no difficulty, but elsewhere it caused some inconvenience and some heartburning. In some quarters it was regarded as a piece of professional disloyalty, compromising the claims of the Nonconformist ministry in general; in others as a "harmless eccentricity." Strangers were often perplexed how they should address him, or describe him, without apparent discourtesy. It was not till the University of Glasgow made him a Doctor of Laws that the problem was finally and satisfactorily solved.[1]

Early in October 1869—a few days before the Union meetings—Dale lost his father. The personal relations between them had not been exceptionally close or intimate, but there was no lack of genuine affection on either side;

[1] A full account of the reasons which led him to discard the title of "Reverend" may be found in the *Congregationalist*, November 1874, pp. 666-672.

and it is clear that he himself was deeply moved by the bereavement. In a letter written many years later he records what he felt.

To Mr. E. A. Lawrence

15th July 1893.

I suppose that you have felt what I remember feeling very vividly when my own father died about twenty years ago. I seemed to be left in the front rank with only death before me, and what lies beyond. Till then, it seemed that there was another life before me, and that my turn would not come till it had disappeared. The deep sense of this passed away, of course, as the years came and went, but the experience was a considerable factor in life.

During the interval between the chairmanship of the Union and the sermon at Swansea in 1871, Dale had passed under the dominion of a new phase of truth. No revolution had occurred—no dynasty had been dethroned—in his spiritual realm. The frontiers of his thought had been advanced; all that he had possessed—all that had possessed him—still remained intact; but he had moved on into new territory, and there was his energy concentrated. Aged 41.

For years he had been filled with the idea of the living Christ; now his mind was fixed on the relations that exist between those who believe in Christ to one another and to Him. Congregationalism, in its modern developments—so it seemed to him—had drifted far, and was drifting still, into an excessive individualism. It had "exaggerated and misinterpreted the great Protestant principle that religion is an affair that lies altogether between man and his Maker." It had forgotten that "isolation is not the law of the religious life." The Church, as conceived by most of its members, had well-nigh degenerated into "an organisation for keeping improper persons from the Lord's Supper, and for securing the election of well-qualified ministers and deacons." Among those who gave any thought at all to the matter not a few regarded the Congregational system as embodying

the democratic principle in its application to Church government, and defended it on those lines. The very idea of the Church as a Divine institution, endowed with supernatural powers and enriched with Divine gifts, had become alien to the thought and temper of the time; upon Congregationalism as a whole it had ceased to exert any real influence. In the sermon on "The Communion of Saints,"[1] and in an essay on "The Idea of the Church,"[2] he began to recall, so far as he was able, the conceptions of a nobler age.

Without entering into subsidiary details, it will be enough to indicate the outline of his teaching.

In the first place, he asserted the necessity of spiritual communion for the vigour and depth of the religious life. "Fellowship with other Christian men is almost as necessary to us as fellowship with God Himself." The very law of our being forbids us to live alone. It is in union with others that spiritual affections are quickened and spiritual energies intensified. The Christian Church affords that "Communion of Saints," without which sanctity cannot thrive.

The law of interdependence—of human solidarity—he enforced with a wealth of illustration. To follow the argument through all its windings would be too long and laborious a task. A few sentences, taken here and there, will suggest its direction.

Christian Theology has steadily refused to acknowledge that there can be any real separation between the individual and the life and fortunes of the race. It has elaborated the doctrine of Original Sin; it has maintained the corruption of human nature; it has spoken of the Federal Relations of Adam to all his descendants. Nothing can be more technical, artificial, and unreal than many of the forms in which the truth has been expressed. Perhaps any expression of it must necessarily involve the most startling paradoxes. But every theological system which has had any life in it, has vigorously asserted the mysterious law

[1] *The Communion of Saints*, London, 1871.

[2] *Ecclesia: a Second Series of Essays on Theological and Ecclesiastical Questions*, edited by H. R. Reynolds, D.D.: "The Idea of the Church in Relation to Modern Congregationalism," by R. W. Dale, pp. 355-412.

by which we are involved—to put it in an extreme, exaggerated, and offensive form—not only in the consequences of each other's sins, but in the very sinfulness of those sins.[1]

There is a wonderful unity binding the human race together. We have a common and not merely an individual life. We are not merely *akin* to each other; we are *one* with each other. This is partly the reason why it was necessary for God to become man—if man was to be restored to God. A new element had to be introduced into the common life of the race. It was necessary that one of ourselves should stand in the very glory of God before we could come out of the darkness into the light.[2]

We also need the inspiration which is derived from communion with the supernatural strength of all those who, through Christ, have passed into the kingdom of heaven. We must not be solitary fugitives from the bondage of our old and evil life, but must have the triumphant confidence which comes from a vivid consciousness that we belong to a great nation which has been delivered from the oppressor by mighty signs and wonders, and passed through the very depths of the sea into safety and freedom. Our faltering faith is largely the result of our spiritual isolation.[3]

We did not sin alone; we are not to be saved alone. . . . Now that Redemption has been wrought for us by God, a union still more intimate and vital exists between all regenerate men, and when Redemption is perfected that union will be consummated. Already the common strength, and the common light, and the common joy of the Church belong to every Christian man. "We are members one of another." But as yet the ideal unity is not perfectly realised. The prayer of our Lord is the true Apocalypse. The glory of the Church will be consummated when that wonderful petition of His receives its complete answer, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us."[4]

But this is not all. The Church, indeed, is an institution, divinely established, in which spirit draws near to spirit, and in which brethren in Christ recognise the presence and the power of the same Lord; but it is much more. It also affords the closest access to God, and in it Christ reveals Himself in a special and unique way: "Where two or three are gathered together in My

[1] *Ecclesia*, second series, pp. 364, 365.
[2] *The Communion of Saints*, p. 37. [3] *Ibid.* pp. 38, 39.
[4] *Ecclesia*, second series, p. 366.

name, there am I in the midst of them." What was Christ's meaning when He said this?

The words, as Dale was wont to insist, are more than a promise; they state a fact, and an eternal fact. Our Lord declares that—

> "Where two or three are gathered together" in His name, He also is present; they cannot meet without having Him with them; whatever this special Presence of His may be, it is not contingent on His fidelity to His promise; He does not say, "Where two or three are gathered together, there *will I be*," but "there *am I* in the midst of them."[1]

The addition with which these words are constantly quoted—"There am I in the midst of them, *and that to bless them*," or, as varied in the familiar collect of the Anglican liturgy, "a prayer of St. Chrysostom"—"Who dost promise that when two or three are gathered in Thy name, *Thou wilt grant their requests*"—lowers their meaning and suppresses the truth which they were intended to teach. This was not at all what our Lord meant.

He had just said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven." He promises that the prayer in which "two or three" unite shall be answered—not by Himself, but by the Father. The ground on which this promise rests is that when His disciples are gathered together in His name, He is one of the assembly, however small it may be; the prayer in which they unite is His as well as theirs; in realising their union with each other, they realise their union with Himself; He is present, not to answer the prayer, but to unite in it.[2]

Not because of an artificial and unreal imputation of the merits of Christ, do our prayers have power with God; but because we are indeed and of a truth in Christ, and because Christ is in us. It is always true that it is through Him that we draw near to God. The only life which renders fellowship with God possible, is the life which is in us as members of the mystical body of Christ. But the special presence of Christ is with us when we are met together in His name; and when He is specially with us we are nearest to God. Then whatever we

[1] *Ecclesia*, second series, p. 400. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 400, 401.

ask shall be done for us. The prayers we offer are His rather than ours; and when the answers come we may venture to think of Him as saying to the Father, "Inasmuch as Thou hast done it to one of the least of these My brethren, Thou hast done it unto Me."[1]

Those were the years of his strength, and he proclaimed the truth that possessed him with an indomitable ardour and a rapturous exultation. He declared it to his own people, not once or twice only, but week after week and month after month, in an endless variety of form, now as his central theme, now as an episode or interlude of thought, till it had become fixed and rooted in their minds. And in all parts of the country, wherever he went in those days, this was the message that he bore; to congregations in crowded cities, rich in wealth and power and fame, and to the humblest of village churches —a handful of peasants meeting in an obscure room, weak, poverty-stricken, sometimes oppressed. To revive in the Church a fuller consciousness of its mysterious dignity, and a truer conception of its great purpose; to rekindle the faith that Christ not only guides His Church and watches over it, but is actually present in the midst of it—this seemed to him at that time the one task to which he had been set.

Nor were pulpit and platform the only places in which he vindicated his faith; in private, as in public, he asserted it with inflexible conviction. One illustrative incident he himself has recorded. He was spending a summer holiday at Grasmere, and had walked over to Patterdale to spend the day with Dr. Abbott, the headmaster of the City of London School, an able and prominent Broad Churchman. In the early evening his friend started with him to set him on his way home, still intent on the questions, religious and ecclesiastical, which they had discussed for many hours.

We were walking together from the head of Ullswater up towards the foot of Grisedale Tarn, and he asked me, with an

[1] *The Communion of Saints*, p. 21.

expression of astonishment and incredulity, whether I really thought that if the shepherds of Patterdale—a dozen or score of them—determined to constitute themselves a Congregational church, it was possible for such a church to fulfil the purposes for which churches exist. To such a question there could be but one answer. Great natural sagacity, high intellectual culture, however admirable, are not essential: "It is enough if, when they meet, they really meet in Christ's name—but no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

Christ's presence with the shepherds of Patterdale would be a sufficient reply to all who challenged their competency to discharge the functions of church government. Whatever gifts and endowments might be necessary for the development of religious thought and life in their full perfection, the Divine presence was its one and its only essential condition. *Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia.*

CHAPTER XI

POLITICAL AND PUBLIC WORK

The duties of Christian citizenship—Politics and the pulpit—Liberalism under Palmerston—Willing to fight for Freedom—The American war: his attitude—Defends Scholefield—The struggle for Reform—The franchise a safeguard against revolution—Accused of encouraging violence—Lectures to the new electors on "The Politics of the Future"—Takes part in a contested election—The General Election 1868—The Birmingham Liberal Association—Position in public life—"The most practical thing in the world."

EARLY in the year 1864 Mr. Bright visited his constituents at Birmingham. He addressed a great meeting in the Town Hall; and it was also arranged that he should be present at a conversazione held in his honour. The evening came; the tables were spread; the room was crowded. But there had been one oversight: Mr. Bright had not been informed that a speech was expected from him; and when so taken by surprise he was greatly disconcerted. He would not disappoint the gathering, but he insisted that some one else should share the burden. Dale was pressed into the service; the two were taken into an unoccupied room, and were allowed half an hour to prepare for their task. Bright, though he had much to say, found it difficult to put his thoughts into shape so rapidly, and spent much of the time in asserting that a man who preached two sermons or more in every week had a great advantage through incessant practice in arranging his materials. Dale, in his remarks, dealt almost wholly with one theme—the duty of religious men to take their part in politics, the responsibilities of Christian citizenship.

Of all secular affairs, politics, rightly considered, are amongst the most unworldly, inasmuch as the man who is devoted to political life ought to be seeking no personal and private good. The true political spirit is the mind that was in Christ Jesus, who "looked not on His own things, but also on the things of others."

He went further: political activity was not merely legitimate; it was a positive and an imperative duty.

I feel a grave and solemn conviction, which deepens year by year, that in a country like this, where the public business of the state is the private duty of every citizen, those who decline to use their political power are guilty of treachery both to God and to man.

It was not his custom to preach political sermons. "The church," he felt, "is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind;" and he could seldom bring himself to discuss questions even of ecclesiastical polity in the pulpit. But on rare occasions, when problems involving grave moral or religious issues occupied the mind of the nation, he did not hesitate to examine the question from the standpoint of a minister of Christ. Silence in such a case seemed to him not only a piece of cowardice, but a breach of plain and obvious duty.

I have never been quite able to understand the principles of those Christian ministers who, whenever any great calamity falls upon the country—cholera, a bad harvest, or a destructive war—preach to their people about the righteousness of God in punishing us for our national offences, implore God's pardon, entreat Him to avert His judgments, and yet think that there is something like profanation in attempting to show from the pulpit by what political measures our legislation might be made more righteous and Christian, or by what principles our foreign policy must be directed if we desire to win God's approbation. To tell men that God is punishing the nation for its sins by sending drought, or a cattle-plague, and then with a grave face to protest that it would secularise and degrade the pulpit to point out what those sins are,—to affirm confidently that the national trouble is a proof of the Divine anger, and then to say that the investigation of our national conduct by which that

anger has been provoked is altogether beyond the province of the Christian minister, strikes me—to say the least—as somewhat inconsistent.

For himself, however, he was not eager to engage in party conflicts. While he did not hesitate to attend great meetings called to discuss the questions of the day, and to express his opinions on the platform, he did not connect himself with any political organisation, nor did he meddle with the rough work of election contests. To do so during the earlier years of his ministry, even after he had taken his place as a leader in the public life of Birmingham, seemed to him unnecessary and unwise. But he never made any secret of his convictions. Both in domestic and foreign affairs he was heartily in sympathy with the Liberal party, though on some points he repudiated the creed that was then in favour with many of those with whom he was associated. He was prepared largely to extend the limits within which the collective action of the State should replace individual enterprise; he advocated a vigorous policy in our dealings with other nations. Palmerston was not his ideal statesman. He was often offended by his levity in evading problems that pressed for serious attention, by his indifference to principle, by his inability to comprehend the moral issues involved in the questions that were then beginning to stir the public mind. But he honoured him as the friend of European freedom, and felt that in foreign affairs Palmerston instinctively and habitually took a high position, and that he had "a nobler idea of the responsibilities of a great State abroad than many younger statesmen."

Inheriting the traditions of those stormy years during which this island was the only sanctuary and the last asylum of Freedom, and when the highest interests of the human race seemed suspended on our supremacy in Europe, he may have been too restless, too eager in attempting to preserve by any means the position we had won in the great war. But surely—and this was the point on which he differed from some younger men—our imperial power was not granted us by the providence of God merely that we might be able to protect our commerce in remote

seas, and by the display of our vast resources extort from unwilling nations new facilities for increasing our already almost boundless wealth. It may be quite true that if a country is not able to win freedom for itself, it will not be able to use or to preserve it, even if freedom is conferred through the aid of foreign arms; and yet wrongs so flagrant may be committed by a despotic and irresponsible government as not only to provoke the indignation of the civilised world but to justify peremptory and forcible intervention. . . . But no such grounds as these can sustain the policy of those who assert that even when the independence and the very existence of a country are threatened by the ambition and selfishness of a foreign state, we have no right to interfere to prevent the impending catastrophe, because our own interests are not involved. I have even heard that one of the most distinguished of our younger politicians is unfavourable to the maintenance of the squadron on the west coast of Africa, not because he thinks it inefficient, but because he cannot see what national interest we have in suppressing the slave-trade. This is only a legitimate application of the miserable, ignoble, corrupting principles of policy which appear to be winning a temporary popularity—principles professed, unhappily, by some generous men who look back with disgust upon the entanglements into which our old diplomacy had brought us with some of the most illiberal continental states; but I cannot believe that such principles as these will have any permanent hold on the mind of the country. We may sometimes be compelled to be the indignant and inactive witnesses of wrongs that we cannot prevent or redress; but with nations, as with individuals, the power to confer a benefit or to avert an injury is inseparably associated with the duty of using it.[1]

From this standpoint, he did not hesitate to express his sympathy with Garibaldi and the Italian patriots, or with those who were attempting—a hopeless task—to secure freedom for Poland. He could not attend the town's-meeting held to protest against the cruelties of Russian tyranny, and to demand that the claims of Poland to independence should be supported by the British Government, but the letter that he addressed to the chairman of the meeting shows how strongly he felt, and how far he was ready to go in giving effect to his

[1] From a sermon preached on the death of Lord Palmerston, 22nd October 1865.

convictions. He scouted the idea that we should trust to "moral influence" only:—

> By all means let us try that first; but while we maintain a large army and a splendid fleet to protect our own shores, I trust that we shall never shrink from using both in behalf of justice and freedom whenever our national duty and our national honour require us to afford the good cause material as well as moral support. Unless it is understood that Armstrong guns and iron-plated ships are at the back of our diplomacy, diplomacy is not likely, I fear, to be very successful—at any rate with Russia.[1]

So warlike an utterance did not pass without protest; one of the controversialists in his ardour declared that "Ancient history records no saying of Nero, Caligula, or Herod equal to it."

For the most part, however, before the year 1866, Dale was too busily occupied in other duties to find much time for politics, and political interest among his fellow-townsmen was just then at a low ebb. The American War was running its course; and for the moment, the question of Parliamentary Reform was overshadowed and held in abeyance. Even in Birmingham, notwithstanding Bright's influence, sympathy was to some extent divided. In the earlier stages of the conflict, Dale was not among the ardent partisans of the Federal Government. He distrusted the strength of the Anti-slavery spirit in the North. When Slidell and Mason, the Confederate envoys, were arrested on board the *Trent*, under the British flag, he resented and denounced so signal an infringement of the law of nations. Not until Lincoln proclaimed the freedom of the slave, did he heartily and unreservedly take sides with the Northern States. Even then he emphatically condemned the habit of extolling all American institutions to the disparagement of our own. At the same time, he rebuked the attempts made by some to involve us in the war, and their reckless violation of neutrality in building ships and supplying guns.

The position that he occupied enabled him to inter-

[1] 26th March 1863.

vene on more than one occasion to avert disruption. At one of the annual meetings of the Borough members he defended Mr. Scholefield, who had provoked a large section of his constituents by joining an association organised to secure official recognition of the Confederate States. A vote of censure was threatened. Bright, who was present, had made a powerful appeal, in which indignation against his colleague was not too carefully disguised. Feeling was exasperated, a split seemed inevitable. Dale was put up to support a resolution of confidence in both members, and in a few minutes he swung the audience right round. After a tribute to Bright for his public services, he grappled with the immediate danger. He expressed no sympathy with Mr. Scholefield's opinions, but urged that a vote of censure could serve no good purpose. Mr. Scholefield was in no danger of losing his seat; their political opponents would see to that. At the same time, his action could lead to no practical result. The national policy was settled: the course was fixed, and there could be no swerving from it. Then came a sentence that was remembered and quoted for years after:—

"There are two things that I have always admired in the people of Birmingham: in the first place, they can tolerate differences of opinion in men they can trust; and in the second place, they stand by their old friends through fire and through water."[1]

Up to this point there had been cross currents, but now the whole mass moved together. The opposition was disarmed, and confidence in both representatives was carried by acclamation.

As the struggle for Reform drew on, he began to take an active part in the controversy. Special services that he had been holding on Sunday afternoons brought him into closer contact with working men, who stood apart from the churches—so they said—because the churches and their ministers gave them so little help in obtaining their political and social rights. He was anxious that the democracy should not be unjustly prejudiced against

[1] 26th January 1864.

religion, and also that Christian principles should assert their influence in dealing with the problems which an extended franchise would push to the front.

During the conflict, which lasted practically for two years, many demonstrations were held at Birmingham. Dale appeared at most, and spoke at several, always in the same sense. One of his speeches made a great stir. Gladstone's Bill of 1866 had been rejected, through the disintegration of the Liberal party; the Conservatives had taken office, and were preparing to outbid their opponents. Their proposals were now before the country, in all their original complexity, and a town's-meeting was at once convened to discuss the plan. Mr. Disraeli, in introducing the Bill, had stated that he regarded the franchise as a popular privilege, not a democratic right. In combating that declaration, Dale said:— Aged 37.

I will tell you why I think the franchise to be a popular or democratic right. Our theory of representation is that it is intended to afford by peaceful and constitutional means a secure protection to the interests of all classes of the community. If a tax is to be levied, they have a right to some security that it shall be equitably levied. If a law is to be passed, they have a right to some security that that law shall not injuriously affect their interests. The franchise is intended to afford the people a peaceful and legal control over the action of the legislature and the executive; and I contend that the people—all classes of the people—have a clear right to this control, and that therefore the franchise is not simply a privilege granted by the legislature, but a necessary check on the legislature imposed by the people. There is always an ultimate check both on the crimes and on the follies of governments. Self-defence is one of man's natural rights, and if we cannot protect our interests in one way we must do it in another. The franchise is a peaceful and harmless method of protecting those interests. The franchise touches no man's life—destroys no man's property; and if you prevent four-fifths of the people from asking for a legal influence in the public life and action of the country, you compel them to resort to other means of self-protection. Deny the people the franchise, and the right of revolution still remains. Deny the people the franchise, and they are driven to secret conspiracy, or to a display of their overwhelming physical force. Those who would deny the people the franchise must take their choice between

the hustings and the barricade. If they take from the people the peaceful weapon by which they desire to protect their interests, they still leave to the people, be it remembered, the pike and the rifle. I say this, not because I think that we are near a time when a resort to force will be necessary, but because I think that in times of peace we should effect such constitutional changes as shall render political excitement needless in times of public disaster.[1]

These phrases did not escape the misrepresentation that they provoked. The "pike, the rifle, and the barricade" appeared in Tory leading articles and in Tory speeches with wearisome iteration for years after; and the words, without their context, were invariably so quoted as to suggest—if the charge was not actually made—that they sanctioned and encouraged an appeal to violence. Even among Dale's friends the opportunity was thought too good to lose, and one of the cartoons published during the by-election that came shortly after—a parody of Faed's once famous picture, "Conquered but not subdued"—represented him among other figures as sitting on the ground, and teaching a truculent bull-dog to hold a pike erect behind a heap of paving-stones and cobbles. The misrepresentation did him harm; but the mass of the people knew what he had said and understood what he meant; and as he drove through the crowds that watched the great Reform procession on its way to the historic meeting-place at Brookfields, a few weeks later, the welcome that he received all along the line was one of exceptional enthusiasm.

As soon as the Reform Bill had been accepted by Parliament, the leaders of the Liberal party in Birmingham arranged for a series of lectures dealing with the political and social questions by which the new electors were likely to be most affected. Dale undertook to deliver the first of these addresses, and in *The Politics of the Future*[2] he discussed the principles and the aims that should determine the political action of the enfranchised

[1] 22nd March 1867.

[2] *The Politics of the Future, a Lecture to the New Electors;* delivered in the Town Hall, Birmingham, on Tuesday evening, 19th November 1867.

electors. The lecture is by far the most elaborate and detailed of his public utterances during this period: it sums up the substance of his political teaching; it illustrates the spirit in which he approached the discussion of national affairs. An exhaustive analysis, however, would be superfluous; a few extracts will sufficiently indicate its character.

After discussing the morality of the Conservative "surrender," and repudiating the forebodings of those who regarded the recent change as fatal to the peace and security of the nation, he urged that even if the new electors were hostile to the established order, it was surely better that they should be able to express their hostility in a legal and constitutional manner—repeating and amplifying the argument that he had enforced on the same platform a few months before.

> To my mind the very possibility of general and violent resistance to the government of a country like this is appalling; and I ask with whom does the blame lie of exposing us to this terrible danger—with those who endeavoured to keep the franchise from the most numerous class of the community, and so withheld from them the only weapon of self-defence, which is at once harmless and effective, or with me, for pointing out what would be the inevitable effect of that unjust and perilous policy in times of great popular excitement? With whom does the blame lie? With me, for maintaining that it is infinitely safer that the great masses of our countrymen should defend their interests and vindicate their rights by constitutional means than by the exercise of physical force, or with those who denied the people the suffrage, and were willing, if dark and calamitous times should come, to encounter the terrible risk of conspiracy and rebellion? It was I who pleaded that it was wiser, safer, more just, that the rights of the people should be protected in Parliament by their constitutional representatives; it was our opponents who, for a time, said, No—whatever their real or supposed grievances they shall have no means of self-defence except the pike, the rifle, and the barricade.[1]

Among the questions of the day national education held the first place in his thought: indeed, at that time,

[1] *The Politics of the Future*, p. 6.

and for some years before, he rarely spoke in public on any platform without enlarging on the necessity of a great extension of our educational system. He had no love for denominational schools; but remembering how they had arisen, and all that they had done, he recognised that it would be both unwise and unjust to sweep them away, and he was willing to leave them undisturbed, only requiring the security for religious freedom given by an efficient conscience clause. But where such schools did not exist, or where they were inadequate for the needs of the population, he urged that the task of providing school accommodation should be no longer left to the Churches. Half the nation, it was admitted, stood aloof from all Churches—never attended public worship. Why should the other half be expected to bear the expense of originating schools to give secular instruction to the whole nation? Why should the clergyman or the dissenting minister—both poor men, probably, and overworked—have this fresh care thrown upon them? Municipal bodies, and similar authorities in the rural districts, should be empowered to establish schools, maintained partly by local rates, partly by grants from the imperial treasury. Mr. Lowe was then perhaps the best hated man in the kingdom, and Dale needed no little courage and strength to carry the audience with him in the following appeal:—

There is one distinguished member of the House of Commons who has the genius, the practical knowledge, and the courage which are necessary to lead and carry through this great and necessary reform. He has made one great blunder, and for the last two years his name has never been mentioned in great assemblies of the people without provoking loud expressions of derision and indignation; but now that he is hopelessly defeated on the question of Parliamentary Reform, we who are triumphant can afford to forget the bitterness and the energy with which he opposed us. It is unlikely that any words of mine can reach him, but I will venture to say in your name—in the name of the new electors whose enfranchisement he so fiercely resisted—that if he will only win for us a great and generous and equitable system of popular education, if he will only bring a good school within the reach of every child in the country, he shall be

received by us with an enthusiasm which shall prove that all our resentment has vanished. He shall hear no more of the Cave of Adullam, or of the Scotch terrier; and the people will forget how Robert Lowe resisted their enfranchisement in their gratitude for his services in promoting the education of their children.[1]

The working classes themselves would naturally make the "condition of England" question their first care. Legislation had already done much for the welfare of the people; with their help it might do more. But legislation must aim at the right ends, and must confine itself within its natural limits. The condition of the labourer might be, and should be, improved; but labour must for ever remain indispensable.

What is wanted is not merely perfect freedom for every man to rise by his own intelligence and industry from the lowest to the highest positions in the State. There is nothing now to prevent a mechanic becoming a master, or a working man becoming a capitalist. But I confess that I have never told young men that it was their supreme duty to try "to rise in the world," as the phrase goes, and that the supreme reward for a life of incessant and exhausting labour was to win a position in society to which other men were born. . . . I honour those who have the moral energy and the intellectual power necessary to achieve, by honest means, such a success as that; and it is only just that any career for which a man is fit should be open to him. But from the nature of the case only a very few men can rise to great wealth and to a great social position. . . . If every man became a master, no master could have a man. . . . The great mass of the people must always spend the greater part of their time and strength in physical labour. At present much of that labour is exhausting, much of it is injurious to health, much of it is extremely unpleasant. Every year some new application of the principles of science is diminishing the strain upon human muscle, and the steam-engine is doing the work for us which our fathers had to do for themselves; but until new forms of machinery are invented of which none of us have ever dreamt, and until we learn how to make one machine make another without the intervention of human hands, physical toil is the destiny of the majority of the race. We must learn never to think of physical labour as degrading. All work is honourable

[1] *The Politics of the Future*, pp. 8, 9.

which is done by an honest man, and which ministers to the necessities or the comfort of society. The object of all social and political speculations should be not to construct Utopian schemes in which the irresistible necessity of hard work is ignored, but to learn how the life of the labourer may be made happier.[1]

The corruption that had impoverished the resources of the nation in the past had been lessened, if not abolished; but other evils still survived. The worst enemies of society now were not those at the top, but those at the bottom.

Take the Borough of Birmingham alone. We have no frowning castle overlooking and threatening the town, the stronghold of a feudal baron and filled with armed men, permitted by their lord to rob and to ill-treat peaceful citizens almost at their pleasure. But we have what is perhaps worse than this. We have a vast gaol, which is far more costly to support than were any of the strongholds of the robber chiefs that once dwelt in the castles of the Rhine. That gaol contains at this moment three hundred and fifty men, women, and children who are fed, clothed, and lodged at your expense and mine, who from week to week are being let out to plunder the property and to injure the persons of the rest of the community.[2]

The pecuniary burdens our criminals lay upon us are bad enough, but they inflict upon us other evils still more serious. These unhappy people are incessantly corrupting the morality of the community. They meet your boys as they come away from the jewellers' shops and metal works where they are apprenticed, and persuade them to rob their masters; they meet your young men and women, your brothers and sisters, at places of public entertainment and gradually tempt them to crime; their children meet your children coming home from school and teach them gambling and profanity, and perhaps at last provoke some of them to positive violations of the law. You have a great practical concern in whatever measures are likely to make the criminal classes disappear, and I trust that such measures will have your hearty support. Your true enemies are not those who ride in carriages, but those who ride in the prison van. You suffer infinitely more from the criminals that prowl about our streets than from the holders of pensions and sinecures whom your fathers were accustomed to call the "bloated aristocracy." The

[1] *The Politics of the Future*, pp. 10, 11. [2] *Ibid.* p. 14.

reformers of '32 raised a loud outcry against hereditary legislators and place-holders, I ask you to think of the evils inflicted on the State by hereditary criminals; for remember that it is not lands and titles and wealth alone that are being transmitted from father to son; a large proportion of the men that occupy our gaols to-day are the children of men who occupied the same cells twenty years ago; and the men who occupy them now, if suffered to do it, will transmit their lawless character to their descendants.

We must repeal, if we can, this "law of entail," which is infinitely more perilous to the country than that which has brought the soil into the hands of a mere fraction of the population. For the sake of the children themselves, for the sake of the safety and prosperity and morality of the nation, we must ask that some new and more stringent measures shall be adopted by which every child who is manifestly destined to a life of crime and misery shall, if possible, be rescued from its doom.[1]

Other questions, of greater or less importance, were not forgotten: the diminution of Pauperism, the reorganisation of the Army and Navy, the responsibility of the Governors of British possessions abroad (the Jamaica atrocities were still fresh in men's minds), the abolition of Church rates, and the disendowment of the Irish Church. But while urging the new electors to action, he felt bound to add a word of caution, lest past injustice should be repeated and perpetuated in its most intolerable form.

You have achieved your own political rights; resolve to respect the rights of others. The history of our country has been a long and magnificent battle for freedom, and I believe that the recent extension of the franchise will render more secure the victories we have already won, and make fresh victories possible. But remember that even popular governments may be guilty of tyranny. Christianity taught mankind that every individual citizen has rights which are sacred, and which the State, whatever its constitution, cannot invade without guilt. That principle has been wonderfully fruitful. It constitutes the great distinction between ancient and modern conceptions of liberty. The freest republics of Greece asserted an absolute and unlimited control over the individual citizen. His freedom consisted simply in this, that he had his vote in the assemblies that made the laws;

[1] *The Politics of the Future*, p. 15.

and when that vote was once given there were no inviolable rights left to him; the State acknowledged no limits to its power. The revelation of the Divine dignity and wonderful destiny of the individual soul introduced a new idea into the ethics of Government, and in Christian states men have learnt—though as yet very imperfectly—that the State exists to protect and guarantee the freedom of individual men, and that every man has rights which the State must not presume to touch. This is true under every form of government. To transgress the limits within which the power of the State should be restrained is tyranny—whether the laws of the State be established by the whole people or by only an inconsiderable portion of them. I have therefore heard with great concern the principle thoughtlessly asserted, that where the suffrage is universal, no man's freedom is injured by any law which the majority may choose to pass. That principle destroys the very foundations of liberty.

Suppose the majority of the whole people of England determined that every Englishman should worship in an Episcopal Church, and that every Romanist, and Nonconformist, and Jew that refused to obey should suffer fine or imprisonment; the mere fact that a majority had passed such a tyrannical law would not make it less tyrannical. Suppose that in one of your workshops it were proposed that every man should be compelled to drink a pint of beer a day whether he liked it or not; if nineteen out of twenty voted for it, the remaining man, if he happened to be a teetotaller, and even though he had been permitted to vote, would be the victim of atrocious injustice. A law must be in itself just and wise, or the vote of a majority can never make it either wise or just. A great writer said many years ago that if the united posterity of Adam had voted, and since the creation had done nothing but vote, that three and three were seven, this would not have altered the laws of Arithmetic, or put to blush the solitary Cocker who continued to assert privately that three and three were six. Almost the only danger incident to the recent extension of the suffrage seems to me to be this: that the people may forget that though it is right that the majority of the nation should direct its policy and legislation, there are many things that even a majority has no right to do. You have gained this new power, not that you may use it tyrannically, but that you may extend and perfect the liberties of your country.[1]

It was in the same year, 1867, that he first took any active part in a Parliamentary election. Mr. Scholefield, one of the borough members, died suddenly in July; and

[1] *The Politics of the Future*, pp. 18, 19.

Mr. George Dixon—till recently the senior representative of the city—who was then Mayor, resigned his office and contested the seat with Mr. S. S. Lloyd, the leader of the local Conservative party. So far, Dale had been content to expound principles, leaving others to apply them in practical politics, and avoiding the distasteful incidents of party strife. But now he stepped down into the arena; there were special reasons for doing so. Mr. Dixon was not only his intimate friend, but a colleague in the work of an educational society which had endeavoured to make good in Birmingham the defects of the existing system, and to pay school fees where parents were too poor to pay for themselves. They had been associated in other forms of public service. At the moment Mr. Dixon was the object of an unscrupulous hostility. An itinerant lecturer, named Murphy, whose visits had already disturbed several of the Lancashire towns, not long before had applied for the use of the Town Hall to deliver his lectures on "The Confessional Unmasked" and similar subjects. This being refused, his friends put up a wooden building on a site in the centre of the town. The Irish population were infuriated, and they attacked the hall. The Protestant party—if they can fairly be so described—retaliated; a street in the Irish quarter was wrecked from end to end. Finally, the Riot Act was read; a troop of Hussars dispersed the mob; and order was restored. Mr. Dixon, as Mayor, had to bear the odium thus excited, and by Murphy's supporters he was vehemently denounced. It was a case in which Dale's personal influence—for he could not be suspected of Romish proclivities—might render real service, and it was not withheld. In the Liberal victory his share was conspicuous, and when the General Election occurred in the following year, 1868, it was practically impossible for him to keep out of the fray.

The Irish Church question was now the main issue before the country, and he had mastered the controversy in all its details. The local contest also excited exceptional interest, not in the town alone, but in all parts of the country. Birmingham was one of the three-cornered

constituencies created by the recent Act. The borough had three members; but each elector had only two votes, and he might not give both to the same man. Mr. Bright in the House of Commons had lavished his scorn upon the scheme, and the Liberal party in the borough, no less indignant, were bent on retaining the representation unbroken. The Liberal Association, established three years before, perfected its organisation. After a careful canvass, the wards were divided into three equal groups: two out of the three Liberal candidates were apportioned to each group, and the electors were instructed to restrict their votes to these. Each candidate received votes in two groups—Bright and Dixon in one, Dixon and Muntz in a second, and Bright and Muntz in a third. This "vote-as-you-are-told" system was much criticised. The *Daily News* expressed its belief that the calculations would prove fallacious, and that the plan would fail. But the Liberal electors obeyed orders so loyally, and voted with such precision, that they returned all their candidates by a majority of nearly six thousand.

Throughout the contest, which lasted for several weeks, Dale was indefatigable. He spent long hours in the committee rooms; he spoke in almost all the wards. Some of these election meetings were held in strange places—one of them, at which Mr. Bright himself was present, in a well-known music hall. Few of those on the platform had ever been behind the scenes before. The surroundings were, to say the least, incongruous; and it was amusing to watch sober citizens in black coats and white ties and broad-brimmed hats groping their way to the stage, with mingled curiosity and disapproval expressed in their countenances. As if he had not enough to do in the borough, Dale went out into the neighbouring counties also. He spoke in both divisions of Warwickshire, and elsewhere also. At Leamington, in the very thick of the contest, he lectured on the Irish Church in support of Sir Robert Hamilton and his fellow candidate. The hall was packed to the doors; the enthusiasm was extreme. It must have been strange to recall the time when he

had lived there as a youth with no prospect in life but obscure drudgery.

In the background, behind these more prominent appearances, lies a mass of work that defies calculation. When a man comes to touch at every point the public life of the community to which he belongs, the demands on him are incessant; and the records of those years show how heavy a burden Dale was already bearing. The institutions of the town—hospitals, libraries, schools; public ceremonies of all kinds—presentations, greetings, farewells; philanthropic and social gatherings, to say nothing of religious enterprises, all claimed some share of his time and his thought. If he was often heard on the platform, he was still more often to be found in council and committee where difficulties were dealt with and the real business was done. It is noteworthy that when the Birmingham Banking Company had suspended payment — a commercial calamity of serious magnitude — he came forward at the meeting of depositors with words of encouragement, dissuading from panic and irrational indignation, and adding that "the manner in which Birmingham has met the present disaster has made me even prouder of the town than I was before." It is a crisis like this, when men have money at stake, that tests a public man's influence and shows how far his fellows trust him.

One other incident is worth recalling. As might have been expected, Dale and Dawson, though friendly in their personal relations, soon began to diverge in public affairs. Their convictions, beyond certain limits, were not the same; and when they agreed they did not express their opinions in the same way. At times Dale was strongly provoked, and found it difficult to keep the peace. There was more than one passage of arms between the pair in public. When the monument to Joseph Sturge was unveiled, Dawson—who must have been in a perverse mood that morning—described Sturge as "a singularly unpractical man." Dale was roused. "The most practical thing in the world," he replied, "is to believe in God's law and to try to hold fast to it." It was his own conception of life summed up in a sentence.

CHAPTER XII

THE EDUCATION BILL OF 1870 AND THE NONCONFORMIST REVOLT

Nonconformists and national education—Their earlier position—Discussion at Birmingham in 1861—Change of opinion—Dale supports a national as against a voluntary system—Education Aid Society—Effect of practical experience—Begins to lead—*British Quarterly* articles—The National Education League—Free education an obstacle—Mr. Forster's Bill—Objections to the Government policy—Central Nonconformist Committee established—Opposition to the Bill—Attempts at compromise—Nonconformist amendments—Miall's protest and Gladstone's reply—Nonconformists in revolt—Agitation in the country—The 25th clause: appeal to the Government—The Endowed Schools—A Nonconformist victory—Lectures at Manchester on "The Politics of Nonconformity"—The Manchester Conference—Controversy in the Congregational Union—Mr. Conder and the Chair—The Scotch Education Bill—Visit to Scotland—Letter to Dr. John Cairns—Speech at Aberdeen—Bright's return to the Ministry—Urged to enter Parliament—The Liberal leadership—Hostility to Forster: letter to the *Times*—"The Church Militant"—Invitation to Clapton—Feeling in Birmingham.

BEFORE his year of office in the Chair of the Congregational Union had run out, Dale found himself in the forefront of the conflict that arose out of the Education Act of 1870. The part he took in the struggle itself and in the controversies to which it led, set him prominently before the whole country as a Nonconformist leader, and contributed largely to the growth of his influence.

Among Congregationalists, when his public life began, opinion was in the main hostile to State intervention in education. In 1843 they had resolutely resisted Sir James Graham's proposals, and had watched with suspicion all subsequent attempts to bring the schools under Government authority. Their own schools were for the

most part "Voluntary" schools in the strict sense of the term: they did not conform to Government requirements and did not accept a Government grant; they repudiated State aid as well as State control. The objections to any system of State education originally formulated in 1843, had not lost their strength fifteen years later. In 1858, at Halifax, and in 1859, at Aberdare, the Congregational Union reasserted its disapproval of establishing schools to be maintained out of the poor rate, under the control of local boards of trustees.[1] A few of the leaders—Mr. Binney, for example, and for many years Dr. Vaughan—held out against the prevailing opinion; but they were in a small minority; and denominational feeling, as represented by Mr. Edward Miall in the *Nonconformist*, denied their right to speak for the Congregational churches in general.

When the Union met at Birmingham in 1861, the Congregational Board of Education, led by Mr. Baines and Mr. Samuel Morley, endeavoured to enlist support for the voluntary system, and at an unofficial conference the education question was brought up for discussion. Dr. Vaughan, who till then had taken a different line, made what was regarded as a recantation of his earlier convictions. As a special appeal had been made to the churches of the town, Dale, who was present at the meeting, felt bound to express his opinion, and declared himself unable to assent to the axiom that the State can never rightly meddle with education.[2] In his mind there was a clear distinction between the voluntary principle in religion and the voluntary principle in education; the one did not necessarily involve the other. And though not yet convinced in 1861 that State action was necessary or expedient, he was unwilling to declare definitely against it or to join an association that condemned it. The protest was made in self-defence and to secure himself

[1] Mr. Cobden actively opposed the Bill, which applied only to the manufacturing districts, provided for not more than 60,000 children, and rated all classes while giving the management to one (F. Adams, *The Elementary School Contest*, p. 120).

[2] See pp. 162, 163.

against a demand for help that he was not prepared to give; it was in no sense polemical or aggressive. Some other speakers stood by him; he had the sympathy of some who did not speak. But the recognised leaders, almost to a man, were arrayed against him.

During the next four or five years Congregationalism passed through great changes. A race of younger men was coming to the front, eager for social and political progress, elated by new hopes and pursuing new ideals, ill-content to anchor in shoal water while the full tide of national life was at the flow. They themselves were swept forward by the spirit that they had helped to create. Dale was among the first to encounter the influence of these fresh forces. His opinions rapidly matured, and before the end of 1866 he had reached the conclusion that the time had come when the nation should take up the task that had been attempted by the Churches. The analogies of the past were all in favour of the change. What had happened in the case of education was no new experience. When a great moral duty incumbent on all men was recognised only by the Church, she had no choice but to discharge it herself, that the community might learn from her example. Thus the Church had created hospitals, and had taught Europe to care for the sick; but when the lesson was learnt, the Church had ceased to maintain hospitals of her own and had left their support and management to society at large. The Church had established schools for secular as well as for religious instruction; but when the nation had learnt to care for education, secular teaching might be left to the care of the nation, and the Church would then be free to deal with the religious instruction of the people. Dale believed that the nation was now ready to take over the task; that the work of education might reasonably be undertaken by Government, and that only by Government could it be efficiently performed. In a series of letters published in the *English Independent* early in 1867,[1] he asserted the necessity of a national system of education, enforced by

[1] *English Independent*, February 14, 21; March 7, 1867.

compulsion, and paid for with public funds. He declared himself opposed to a system of free education, willing to safeguard the interests of existing schools, and anxious to avoid any "vexatious interference with individual liberty."

> My position is this: the child has a right to receive elementary education; the State can enforce that right, and ought to enforce it; if the parents are able to pay for that education, they ought to be made to pay; if they are too poor, the right of the child must still be acknowledged, and the State must provide education from public funds. These are the principles on which our legislation is based in relation to the physical necessities of children; I see no reason why they should not be applied to necessities which, though in some respects less imperative, are equally real and important. . . .
>
> What we ask is that all children should be taught somewhere, taught by somebody; but taught, in any way that their parents and chosen teachers think best, that elementary knowledge which all educationalists, no matter what their special theories, acknowledge to be necessary and useful.

In 1847 the Nonconformists had revolted against Lord John Russell's proposals to extend the system of State education. They had carried their hostility to the polls. At Birmingham, Mr. James had led the opposition to the Minutes embodying the plan of the Liberal Ministry. Nonconformist opinion, Dale declared, had now passed beyond that stage. The battle of 1847 would not be fought over again. The actual system of the Government might be modified and improved, but it would not be abandoned. On the principle of Government interference the nation had made up its mind.

Dale's letters dealt with principles rather than with methods; but practical experience in an effort to meet the educational needs of Birmingham soon added precision and clearness to his thought. In the same month in which he wrote, an Education Aid Society was established in Birmingham. The inaugural meeting was attended by men of all parties and professions. Dr. Temple came over from Rugby—no one looked to see him at Canterbury in those days. The Rev. H. M. Capel, the Inspector of Schools, read a paper showing the educational

Aged 37.

deficiencies of the town. Of the children between the ages of three and twelve, fifty per cent, it was estimated, might be found in the schools; ten per cent were at work; the remaining forty per cent were neither at school nor at work, but growing up in ignorance and idleness. And shocking as the estimate then seemed, experience proved that these figures, so far from exaggerating, actually understated the case.

Most of the men who subsequently became prominent as leaders of the Education League were associated in the work of this Society. Dale was one of its Vice-Presidents and took an active part in its operations.

To cope with indifference was beyond the power of any private organisation; but something might be done to help parents whose children were absent from school not through negligence but through poverty. A systematic canvass of the town was made, and during the first year of the Society's existence 6000 orders for the payment of school fees were issued. But this effort, in spite of persistent labour, made a very slight impression. The children whose school fees were paid could not be kept at school. Visitors were employed to hunt up stragglers, but at the end of the year only 2000 remained at school: nearly 4000 had drifted out of sight. Even after the increase, the school attendance was still below the rate of fifty per cent. Other difficulties arose. In some cases the only school to which children could be sent was not efficient and could not be made so. It was not easy to meet the expenses. Time after time Dale had to appeal for funds. He complained that many people interpreted Voluntaryism as "freedom to give nothing."

It became clear that the necessities of the case could not be met in this way; but all were not of one mind as to the right method. In the preliminary discussions which led to the formation of the Society there had been much divergence of opinion. All were agreed that local authorities should be empowered to levy rates for educational purposes; but at this point agreement ended. Chamberlain, Dixon, Dale, and others were in favour of

compulsion, but they were outvoted. All were willing to assist existing schools; but some, while ready to subsidise all schools then established of whatever kind, refused to aid in creating a new class of schools to compete with the denominational system; the denominational difficulty cropped up in other forms also. They had differed at the outset; at the end of a year they differed still.

The influence of this experience on Dale's mind is very conspicuous. The more he came to know of the condition of the people, the deeper he penetrated below the surface, the more vehement he became in demanding a national system of education. He lectured on the subject in many places: during a period of several years he rarely spoke in public without some reference to the subject, whatever his audience; whether addressing the newly enfranchised electors of Birmingham or the ministers and delegates of the Congregational Union. Before long he began to speak for others as well as for himself. For instance, in apologising for inability to attend a conference at Manchester, he referred to "a grave misapprehension" which he desired to remove—that Congregationalists "are anxious to preserve unimpaired the denominational element in our national system of education."

What, before all other things, nine Congregationalists out of ten would prefer would be a national system, locally administered, of secular education. This is what we wanted nearly thirty years ago, and the protest in 1846-47 against all State interference with popular education was really a temporary departure from the policy which Congregational Dissenters originally professed. There are many of us, however, who feel that it would be alike unjust and inexpedient violently to break up the present schools; and we are anxious to discover the best method of conciliating the claims of those who have worked hard under the present system with what seems to us the imperative necessity of introducing a broader and bolder scheme. We have no affection for the denominational system; we should generally prefer secular schools; but there are many amongst us, as I have said, who are unwilling to ignore the great services which have been rendered

to the country by those whose schools are at present in connection with the Privy Council.[1]

For several months he went up and down the country, speaking and lecturing on the duty of Congregationalists with reference to the education of the country. In Wiltshire he had a pleasant experience. It was his habit to combine various kinds of work; and one purpose of his visit was to collect funds for Spring Hill College, which was then in financial straits. He hoped to obtain a donation from his host, Mr. Jupe, who took the chair at his lecture. But at the meeting the chairman differed from the lecturer, and said so. The discussion was warm, and when Dale went to bed that night he felt that he had failed to gain a convert and that he had lost a cheque. But the next morning, before he went away, Mr. Jupe took him aside and handed him a cheque for £100—a gift as magnanimous as it was munificent.

His activity was not confined to the platform. He offered an article on the education question to the editors of the *British Quarterly*, not without some misgiving as to the extent to which they agreed with his opinions.

To Dr. Allon

11th February 1868.

I am not at all sure whether "we three"[2] are at one on all the questions which must be raised in a full and thorough discussion of this subject. As you know, I have been working at it a long time and have had some special advantages for looking at the matter all round. You now have the result. Why I wish you to go through it at once is this: if you two don't agree with me, I want to publish the article as a pamphlet within a fortnight. It ought, in that case, to be in the printer's hands in a week. You will see that I have written rather more than you want; but, my dear fellow, it is so good! If you don't agree with me all through, why can't you let the article stand with my name, if you are not ashamed of it? It appears to me that there are many reasons for doing this now and then.

[1] To Mr. George Dixon, 2nd January 1868.

[2] Dr. Allon and Dr. Reynolds were editors of the *British Quarterly Review*.

I might do more, perhaps, in a pamphlet than with your awful dissent in the *British Quarterly*, but it's worth thinking of.

The article was accepted, and published without signature or editorial reservation.[1]

When the National Education League was established in 1869, Dale, though in full sympathy with its main object and its general policy, felt unable to join it or to attend the inaugural meetings. It was painful to him to stand apart from Mr. Dixon, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Collings, and other friends with whom he had worked for public ends; but he could not accept the fundamental principle of the League that the schools aided by local rates should be free. To remit fees in cases of poverty was a necessity; but to abolish fees indiscriminately—to say nothing of extravagance—would bring the new schools into antagonism with the old; and free education, if provided for the labouring classes—so it then appeared to him—could not justly be withheld in schools of a higher rank.

These and other objections he urged with vigour, both in articles and in addresses; and for several months he remained, with obvious reluctance and regret, outside of both camps—the League and its antagonist, the National Education Union, whose headquarters were at Manchester. His sympathies, however, were unmistakable. He criticised the Union as an antagonist, the League as a friend;[2] and by the end of the year he determined to follow the example of Professor Fawcett and Mr. Mundella, and like them to waive his scruples in order to secure united action. In accepting membership, he guarded himself in the matter of free schools.

In common with some of the most distinguished members of the League, I believe that this proposal is open to grave theoretical objections, and that it must create serious difficulties. My adhesion to the other principles of the League is hearty and unqualified; on this point I must reserve my freedom.[3]

[1] "Nonconformists and National Education": *British Quarterly Review*, April 1868, pp. 399-434.

[2] "National Education: the Union *versus* the League": *British Quarterly Review*, January 1870, pp. 145-166.

[3] 13th November 1869.

Once under the colours, he took his share of the fighting. Many Nonconformists still wavered, and he set himself to win them over. Early in 1870 he attended a conference of Nonconformist ministers at Leeds—Mr. Baines's stronghold—to explain the proposals of the League. He was well "heckled," but he carried the majority of the audience with him. He also visited Bristol—presumably to counteract Mr Morley's influence; and during the first six weeks of the year he was incessantly in the field.

On 17th February 1870, Mr. Forster laid his Education Bill before the House of Commons, and the struggle began in earnest. From the first the measure courted disaster. As its subsequent history—even in Parliament—showed, its birth was premature. Some of its most important provisions had not been fully considered, and were ultimately rejected by the Ministers who had proposed them. Further deliberation would have saved much misunderstanding and some mistakes, more easily avoided than remedied. But Mr. Forster was in a hurry. He saw the hostile forces mustering; he heard the trumpet as it began to speak; and with Olympian self-confidence he thought that by immediate action he might avert popular agitation and settle the dispute before the antagonists could come to blows. He tried to anticipate public discussion—the discussion that must inevitably precede the passing of any great measure. He attempted to legislate before men had made clear to themselves where they stood and what they wanted, and before they clearly saw all that was at stake.

On its first reading, the Bill met with general though guarded approval; but as soon as members of the House of Commons had the text in their hands, opinion among the ranks of the Liberal party began to change. Outside the House dissatisfaction was even more pronounced. Dale's mind was soon made up, and within a week he published a vigorous attack on the scheme, regarded from the Nonconformist standpoint.

His complaint was threefold: (1) that the schools

established by the Act might be, and in many cases would be, purely denominational institutions; (2) that the conscience clause contained in the Bill was inadequate as a protection; (3) that School Boards were empowered to make grants out of the rates to maintain sectarian schools.[1]

Addressing a town's-meeting at Birmingham a few days later he pointed to other blots in the Bill, summing up his criticism in a few vigorous sentences. Aged 40.

I object to this Bill on many grounds. I object to the unnecessary delay which its provisions will occasion in the creation of School Boards in districts where the school accommodation has been proved inadequate. I object to it because it evades the greatest difficulties that lie in the way of educational legislation, instead of solving them. I object to it because it leaves compulsory attendance to the discretion of the School Board: "permissive compulsion" is but another phrase for permissive ignorance; and as I protest against the one, so I will not tolerate the other. What we ask for is education—the best education possible, and at any cost, for every child in England. But not even at the bidding of a Liberal Ministry will we consent to any proposition which, under cover of an educational measure, empowers one religious denomination to levy a rate for teaching its creed and maintaining its worship. On this point compromise or concession is impossible. Our minds are made up; our decision is irrevocable. We respect Mr. Forster—we honour Mr. Gladstone; but we are determined that England shall not again be cursed with the bitterness and strife from which we hoped we had for ever escaped by the abolition of the Church rate.

Had the questions at issue been merely political, or even educational, Dale would have left the work of opposition to the League and its branches. But the Nonconformist objection to the Bill was not one that could be urged with propriety or force by an organisation including every diversity of creed from Anglicanism to Positivism. And other controversies, he foresaw, were not unlikely to arise with which the League had no concern. So, to represent Nonconformist opinion, and to promote united action, the Central Nonconformist Committee

[1] The *English Independent*, 24th February 1870.

was appointed at a public meeting held on 3rd March. Its headquarters were at Birmingham. Dale and his friend Dr. Crosskey were its Honorary Secretaries; Mr. Schnadhorst, whom Dale had known for several years, was appointed Secretary—his first introduction to an eventful career.

The first step taken by the Committee in opposing the Bill was to organise a Petition to the House of Commons and a Protest to Mr. Gladstone from the Nonconformist ministers of the country. The project met with remarkable success: 7300 forms were sent out, and 5173 signatures were received in four days. So strong was the feeling that even among the Wesleyan Methodists, whose sympathies were supposed to be unfriendly to the League, a clear majority signed both documents. Among the other branches of Methodism, and among Congregationalists, Baptists, and Unitarians, the majority supporting the Committee was overwhelming. The Protest was presented to Mr. Gladstone on 11th April by representative delegates. Mr. Forster received a similar deputation from the Congregational Union a few days later. Dale was present, and with other speakers set forth the causes of complaint.[1]

So far his loyalty to the Liberal party and its leader held fast—even under strain. At Manchester, where he spoke on 31st March to an audience that crowded the Free Trade Hall and overflowed into the street; at the Congregational Union of Durham and Northumberland on 10th April; and in Scotland, a few days later, he avowed his faith in Mr Gladstone's sense of justice, and asserted the anxiety of the Nonconformists to avoid any action that might weaken his leadership. But at the same time he insisted that the Prime Minister was bound to consider the grievances of those who had done so much, and suffered so much, in his behalf. Hardly

[1] The Protest was directed: (1) against the power given to local boards to levy a rate for the support of schools in which they may determine that the religious teaching shall be denominational, under whatever conditions the denominational teaching may be given; (2) against the conscience clause, which requires a Nonconformist citizen to claim religious toleration in schools supported by national money; (3) against the permissive arrangement for religious inspection.

a man sat on the Government benches who did not owe his return in large measure to the energy of Nonconformists; and he urged the electors to let their representatives at Westminster hear their voices. "Every member of the Liberal party should be personally appealed to, at once, by his own constituents to press the Government to modify the Bill."

It cannot be said that the Government made no effort to remove discontent; but their effort was half-hearted. Before the Bill went into Committee they announced their intention to adopt a "time-table conscience clause," providing that religious instruction should be given only at the beginning or at the end of school hours. They accepted an amendment prohibiting the use of any "catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination."[1] They dropped the clause (clause 22 in the original Bill) empowering School Boards to make grants to schools not under their control; at the same time, by way of compensation, they proposed to increase the grant out of the Consolidated Fund to all denominational schools.

These concessions failed to satisfy the Nonconformist leaders. Dale condemned the amendments as wholly inadequate, and as betraying the indifference of the Government to the loss of Nonconformist support.

> They do not touch those provisions which provoked the strongest hostility. They adhere to the three fundamental principles by which they think they have solved the religious difficulty—unrestricted liberty of teaching to the schoolmaster, unrestricted liberty of withdrawal to the parent, unrestricted liberty to the majority to levy a rate for the establishment and maintenance of schools in which their own creed shall be taught and their own religious observances practised. The liberty conceded to the parent will, however, in many districts be theoretical rather than practical. . . . Those of us who have hitherto trusted in the Government, must henceforth trust in ourselves.

[1] This amendment was suggested, not by any representative of Nonconformity or the Education League, but by Mr. Cowper Temple, the President of the Education Union. It was repudiated by Mr. Richard, speaking in the name of Nonconformists (20th June 1870).

While the Bill was in Committee, Dale and his colleagues watched its progress with unremitting attention. They spent many hours in the House, in the seats beneath the gallery; they took an active part in discussing the amendments that should be proposed; they were in constant communication with Mr. Miall, and Mr. Richard, and Mr. Winterbotham. At the same time they had to explain their policy to friends in the country on whom they counted for support. The following letter to Dr. Paton of Nottingham refers to Mr. Richard's amendment declaring against any increased grant to denominational schools, and urging that religious instruction should be supplied by voluntary effort.

TO THE REV. J. B. PATON

June [13*th*?] 1870.

The history of Richard's motion is this:—

My fellow-secretary went to London last week, and it was part of his business to do what we had not been able to do thoroughly by correspondence—arrange finally for the line to be taken in the House on Thursday. I had had a good deal of correspondence during the last fortnight with Winterbotham, but on Friday morning things still remained in confusion. Crosskey saw Winterbotham and Miall, and arranged with them for a meeting of our friends in the Tea Room on Friday night. After a long discussion, the conclusion was arrived at expressed in Richard's motion.[1]

Gladstone had sent for Miall and Winterbotham before the House separated for the holidays, and it became clear that the only alternatives before us are—(1) Winterbotham's simple Bible reading; (2) unrestricted sectarian teaching, only excluding creeds, etc.; (3) purely secular schools with free religious teaching by denominations: the Irish Model School system. "Undenominational" teaching—as might have been inferred from Gladstone's talk with the deputation—was plainly out of the question.

Of these alternatives (1), though it will possibly be the ultimate

[1] On the motion for going into Committee, Mr. Henry Richard moved as an amendment (20th June 1870), That ["the grants to denominational schools should not be increased; and that in any system of national education, the attendance should everywhere be compulsory, and the religious instruction should be supplied by voluntary effort, and not out of public funds."]

solution, was felt to be illogical—unsatisfactory to those who want the schoolmaster to be a religious teacher, offensive to the Roman Catholic members, and on other grounds a bad line for fighting on going into Committee; (2) is intolerable; (3) was left.

We have the strongest grounds for believing that between Forster and Gladstone there are the gravest differences on the treatment of the religious question in the Bill, and that should the House go in for "undenominationalism," or for the Bill as it stands, it will be because Gladstone cannot have his own way. He believes that religious teaching to be effective must be absolutely free: the teacher must be able to say all that is in his heart. He has been annoyed at the confusion in the minds of the deputations which have seen him, and told Winterbotham that our [Congregational] Union Deputation was the only one which knew its own mind.

Our Committee have not formally expressed their approval of Richard's motion, but considerable discretion has been left in the hands of the Secretaries, and we knew enough of their minds to be able to predict with moral certainty what their judgment would be.

Further, although our organisation is local, our correspondence covers the country, and with exceptions we are sure that we are supported by the mass of our constituents. During the last ten days the question has come to this—Richard's line substantially, or sectarianism; we can have no hesitation which line to take. Of course it is open to any Nonconformist to contest our policy. Every one knows that there are differences as to the extent of concession which we should be prepared to make to the people who want religion taught by the schoolmaster; I have gone as far as any man almost in that line. But our present position has been taken with the aid of a fuller information than is probably possessed elsewhere of how the question is really regarded by the Government and the House, and whatever may be the solution in Committee, I believe it will be found that our course will be justified by the event. Those who doubt us, should remember that Dixon's amendment[1] was regarded by large numbers of men with intense indignation and hostility. There was a perfect howl against it at first. The event proved that we were right then; I believe it will be the same again.

[1] On the motion for the Second Reading of the Bill, Mr. Dixon moved (14th March 1870), That ["this House is of opinion that no measure for the elementary education of the people will afford a satisfactory or permanent settlement which leaves the question of religious instruction in schools supported by public funds and rates to be determined by local authorities."]

Our Committee interpret Richard's amendment as laying down the general principle which should regulate the treatment of the religious question in rate schools; but as leaving them free to support Bible reading without note or comment.

The amendment was rejected: only sixty-two members supported it; but at clause 14 the division in the Liberal party became serious. Mr. Jacob Bright proposed to add to Mr. Cowper Temple's clause accepted by the Government a provision that in rate-supported schools in which the Scriptures were taught, "the teaching shall not be used or directed in favour of or against the distinctive tenets of any religious denomination."[1] The amendment was of the first importance. The Cowper Temple clause —Dale pointed out—

Excluded the Church Catechism, but left the Board absolutely free to teach every one of its characteristic doctrines. There was nothing in it to prevent the schools of the nation from being used for the same purpose for which denominational schools had been established—to propagate a denominational creed. The "formulary" was forbidden, but the dogma of the formulary was permitted.

But in spite of criticism and menace the Ministry held its ground. When the division was taken, 132 Liberals voted for the amendment; 133 abstained; and the clause was carried by 121 Liberals (including 25 Government officials) and 132 Conservatives. The Ministry, in fact, carried its proposal by the votes of the Opposition; and on other occasions the same alliance was resorted to for the same ends. When Mr. Gladstone, in a vigorous passage of arms with Mr. Miall, bade the Nonconformist leader "for God's sake" to withdraw his support "the moment he thinks it better for the cause which he has at heart that he should do so,"[2] the retort, however natural under provocation, did not tend to lessen estrangement or to appease rancour.

The struggle was now transferred from Parliament to the country, and for the next two or three years Dale

[1] 30th June 1870. [2] 22nd July 1870.

lived in the thick of agitation. With his resentment against the Government still keen, he went down to Shrewsbury to support a second Liberal candidate at a by-election, in opposition to Mr. Cotes, who had declared himself in favour of Mr. Forster's policy. Dale appealed to Nonconformist electors not to vote for candidates who refused to resist a denominational system and the increase of grants to denominational schools. "Nonconformists," he said, "must make it clearly understood that there are certain terms by which their allegiance to the Liberal party stands or falls, and that they mean to take some part in Liberal councils." It was an excellent object lesson; and though the second candidate did not go to the poll, Mr. Cotes lost the election.

But for the most part Dale's work at this time was of another kind. Nonconformist Committees began to form in all parts of the country, and put themselves in communication with one or other of the more powerful organisations at Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham; and as the campaign went on, these three associations had to keep touch between themselves and to agree on joint action. Dale, as representing his own committee, was in incessant demand both on the platform and in council. Before long, his face became almost as familiar at Crewe — where the three committees met — as it was in Birmingham.

As soon as the School Boards were elected and settled to work, the controversy entered upon a new phase. The twenty-fifth clause of the Education Act empowered School Boards to pay fees at any public elementary school in cases of poverty; but wherever the denominational party attempted to put the clause in operation, they met with stubborn resistance. No other question roused keener excitement or provoked more embittered hostility. Strangely enough, the clause had been allowed to pass the House of Commons without an amendment and without a division. It had been so closely associated with clause 22 of the original Bill, which allowed School Boards to subsidise denominational schools, that it had been over-

looked in the resistance which was offered to the more important clause. When clause 23 was thrown overboard before going into Committee,[1] its opponents forgot that clause 25 still remained[2]; and Mr. Gladstone's declaration that the Government had decided to "sever altogether the tie between the local boards and the voluntary schools"[3] helped no doubt to disarm their vigilance. But the clause stood in the Act, and some School Boards at once resolved to use the power which it conferred on them; fees at denominational schools were paid out of the rates before any Board school had been built.

This injustice—so palpable, so unforeseen—roused the indignation of Nonconformists, even if they had been lukewarm before. Dale was conspicuous in the conflict. In May, as one of a deputation sent by the three committees to Mr. Gladstone, he was chosen to address the Prime Minister on this subject; his hand may be traced in a careful statement of Nonconformist objections drawn up at Mr. Gladstone's request.[4] A little later he appeared before Lord Ripon, the President of the Council, on a similar mission. Mr. Gladstone, in the affluence of his dialectical skill, thoroughly enjoyed dealing with opponents at close quarters; but Lord Ripon was not so ready in debate, and his attempt to turn the tables on the delegates was a failure. After listening to their arguments against the clause, he urged that without such a provision a compulsory system—which the deputation were known to desire—was impossible. You cannot compel a parent, he said, to send his child to school, and then deprive him of the right to select the school to which his child shall be sent. In that case, replied Dale, compulsion in the rural districts is impossible: in the villages there is no choice of schools; there is but one; the theory of the Act is that the conscience clause gives adequate protection to the

[1] Clause 22 in the original Bill, providing for assistance out of the rates to existing schools; abandoned on 16th June 1870.

[2] Clause 25 of the Act was clause 24 in the original Bill.

[3] Speech in the House of Commons, 16th June 1870.

[4] Central Nonconformist Committee: Occasional Paper. No. 1, July 1871, pp. 1-6, and pp. 20, 21.

faith of every parent; and if the conscience clause is sufficient for its purpose, what more can the parent demand? The report continues, "The reply of the noble Lord to these observations was not heard. The deputation thanked the noble Marquis and withdrew."[1] Again and again Dale spoke on the subject—twice before the Congregational Union; at Swansea, in reply to a paper read by Mr. Edward Baines; and in London, in opposition to an amendment moved by Dr. Conder, who would neither bless nor ban the clause; at public meetings in Birmingham and elsewhere. He read an elaborate paper at a conference of the League. His speech in the debate at the Birmingham School Board, to which he had been elected, was circulated by thousands. When Mr. Forster and the Education Department endeavoured to force the Boards to exercise a power that the Act left to their discretion, his ardour redoubled, and he fought steadily year after year until the obnoxious clause was at last repealed by Lord Sandon's Act of 1876.

At the same time he was engaged in another battle with the Education Department. The Endowed Schools Act of 1869 provided that a large number of schools in various parts of the country should be placed under new management. Certain exceptions were made in favour of schools that might be regarded as distinctively associated with the Established Church, but elsewhere denominational control and supremacy were to cease; the Act under which the new governing bodies were constituted, expressly directed that "the religious opinions of any person shall not in any way affect his qualification for being one of the governing body of such Endowment."[2] The intention of the Act could hardly have been clearer; nevertheless, out of forty schemes of management prepared by the Endowed Schools Commissioners, sanctioned by the Education Department, and laid on the table in both Houses of Parliament for ratification, thirty-six contained provisions

[1] Central Nonconformist Committee: Occasional Paper. No. 2, October 1871, pp. 13, 14.

[2] Endowed Schools Act 1869, clause 17, section 1.

for the appointment of *ex officio* clerical governors. The Birmingham Committee seems to have been the first to call attention to this anomaly. The legality of such appointments was challenged by Mr. Miall in the House of Commons. At first Mr. Forster endeavoured to treat the matter lightly; and relying on four exceptions out of the forty cases, he replied that it was "not a rule" with the Commissioners that the incumbent of a parish should be *ex officio* a governor of an endowed school.[1] But the question once raised could not be set aside. The Nonconformist opposition was pertinacious. Finally, the Privy Council, at the direction of the Law officers of the Crown, pronounced such appointments illegal, and directed that they should be cancelled in all schemes that had not yet received the sanction of Parliament.

In itself the matter, except as an infringement of law, was not of supreme importance. But it was closely related to a larger question on which Dale felt strongly. He was anxious to secure for Nonconformists their due share in the administration and control of higher education. The disabilities inflicted on earlier generations, he knew too well, had inflicted lasting injury. The attempt to starve and impoverish the intellectual life of Nonconformity by cutting it off from the sources of culture, so far as law could do it, had proved only too successful. With the universities closed against them, excluded by prescription, both as teachers and governors, from the best schools of the country, Nonconformists had been brought to undervalue education and to disparage the learning that had been the pride of their forefathers. This attempt to pack the new governing boards with clerical members revived the policy of exclusion in a feeble and attenuated form; and the passion with which Dale assailed its promoters and defenders was drawn from the past as well as from the present.

How complete the victory over the Department had been he did not realise at first. After the Secretary had announced that the clerical *ex officio* governors had been

[1] House of Commons, 7th August 1871.

withdrawn, Dale was spokesman of a deputation that waited on Lord Lyttelton and the other Commissioners to urge various objections against some of their schemes of management. He pointed out that in several cases sectarian appointments had been made by indirect methods.

Ex officio governors were appointed, who would of necessity be members of the Church of England; thus the Head Master of King's School was appointed an *ex officio* governor of the Sherborne School—the Foster foundation.

Lord Lyttelton.—That has been withdrawn.

Mr. Dale.—Again, in the Chelmsford scheme, the churchwardens elected a governor; and in the Sherborne scheme the churchwardens were *ex officio* governors.

Lord Lyttelton.—They have been withdrawn.

Mr. Dale.—I am delighted to hear it.

Lord Lyttelton.—You see what a power you are, Mr. Dale.[1]

Throughout the autumn, at Swansea, at Bristol, and at Bradford, Dale continued to impeach the educational policy of the Government. Towards the end of November he lectured at Manchester on the "Politics of Nonconformity." The interest excited was remarkable. Not less than ten thousand applications were received for tickets of admission, and the Free Trade Hall was packed from end to end. It was the first emphatic declaration of the Nonconformist revolt. Dale summed up the case of the Nonconformists against the Liberal administration:—The sectarian partiality of the Endowed Schools Commission; the efforts of the Department to force School Boards to pay fees in denominational schools; the increased grant to denominational schools, coupled with a persistent refusal to provide that a fixed proportion of the cost of maintenance should come from voluntary contributions; the deliberate attempt to extend and to enlarge the sectarian system throughout the country at the public cost. Such a policy, crowning the original injustice of the Education Act, he insisted, "relieves 1871.

[1] 11th April 1872, Central Nonconformist Committee: Occasional Paper, No. 5, p. 15.

Nonconformists from their old allegiance to the Liberal party, and requires us so to organise our political power as to prevent the Liberal party from ever inflicting a similar injury again on the principles of religious equality."[1]

He pleaded for immediate action. An education bill for Ireland could not be remote. Already the Roman Catholic hierarchy had met in Dublin and had made known their demands. Declaring themselves "the divinely-constituted guardians" of faith and morals, they claimed absolute control of the elementary schools, provided at the public expense, throughout the greater part of Ireland; power to bring distinctive religious teaching into the daily course of secular instruction; liberty to use Roman Catholic books and emblems in the schools; unrestricted access of the priest to the school; and authority to remove books that they might consider objectionable. Such were their "demands." To such claims Nonconformists were bound to oppose an unflinching resistance; rather than concede them, "let the Liberal party be broken in pieces and for ever destroyed." But experience had shown that even a majority of their own supporters could not keep the Government in the right way; and only by a general uprising among the constituencies could the Nonconformists ensure the success of their protest. They had tried Mr. Gladstone in vain; now they must appeal to the electors.

The audience was stirred profoundly. Every declaration of political independence, every reference to the impending disruption of the Liberal party, was cheered to the echo. At Birmingham, where the lecture was repeated a few nights later, there was equal enthusiasm. The Nonconformists of the Midlands were as resolute as those of Lancashire; they were no less outspoken in their indignation against the Liberal leaders.

The policy of revolt was endorsed by a conference which met at Manchester early in 1872. The gathering was large and representative. Nearly nineteen hundred delegates were present, appointed by eight hundred Non-

[1] *The Politics of Nonconformity*, p. 22.

conformist churches and organisations. As one of the secretaries, Dale was concerned mainly with the arrangement of the business and the drafting of the resolutions laid before the assembly; but he intervened in the debate when it threatened to drift from the straight course. In one instance he helped to avert a serious mischance. A section of the conference were dissatisfied with the resolution, as originally worded, which protested against the educational policy of the Government, and required that candidates for Parliament should pledge themselves to a modification of the Education Act as a condition of Nonconformist support. This was the intention of the resolution, but its phrasing was somewhat vague: it said that Nonconformists "will not accept as a satisfactory representative" a candidate who might refuse to give the required pledge; it did not say that they would back their opinions with their votes. Dr. Guinness Rogers gave voice to the discontent, and moved an amendment —"*will not vote for*"—as trenchant as his speech in proposing it. Opinion was at once divided. Some hesitated to bind themselves by a pledge so stringent, so unqualified. It became evident that the conference might split on the most important of its resolutions, at the very point where any real divergence of feeling would destroy its authority.

Foreseeing the danger, Dale had held himself in reserve. He was busy while the debate went on; and when he rose to speak, he was able to announce that Dr. Rogers and his seconder had accepted the original resolution with the addition of a rider. The words so added were—"and further, to make it clearly understood, that except under the pressure of grave national exigencies they will not give any such candidate their support." The clause gave Dr. Rogers and his supporters what they wanted; they, too, admitted that the claims of Nonconformists, however righteous and reasonable, must be postponed in face of an unjust war or of some grave peril to the constitution. And at the same time, those who were less impetuous did not

feel that they were forced into the fray at all hazards. The resolution, so modified, carried the whole conference with it.[1]

Another instance of the same adroitness occurred soon after at the meetings of the Congregational Union. Persistent attempts had been made to impugn the claim of the Manchester Conference to speak for Nonconformity as a whole. Four hundred ministers and laymen, connected with various denominations, set their names to a declaration protesting against the exclusion of the Bible by law from public elementary schools. Several leading Congregationalists were of the number, and among them Dr. Conder, Dr. Stoughton, and Dr. Newman Hall — men both honoured and beloved. Opponents pointed to their names, and to those associated with them, and asserted—not without some show of reason—that the extreme men, the political gladiators, of Congregationalism, did not truly represent the opinion of the denomination; and on the platform and in the press they assiduously paraded the "Round Robin" —as the memorial was called—to prove their case. It so happened that Dr. Conder had been put in nomination for the Chair of the Congregational Union. Service, ability, character—as all admitted—marked him out for the honour. But many, if not most, of those who on the education question were of the opposite camp, demurred to his election at a moment when such a choice would inevitably be ascribed to sympathy with his position in the controversy. Those who felt that no man should be disqualified for office by his opinions on a special question found themselves shut in between apparent intolerance and certain misrepresentation. And when the Union met in the spring of 1872, the minds of many were swaying to and fro.

Suddenly a way of escape was opened for them—and by their foes. Before the Chairman's election the Union Committee submitted their annual report, which on this

[1] General Conference of Nonconformists held in Manchester, 23rd, 24th, and 25th January 1872. *Authorised Report*, pp. 207-212, 215, 216.

occasion referred to the resistance they had offered to the educational policy of the Government. Mr. Binney, the patriarch of Congregationalism, stated that he accepted the report with the exception of a great many expressions on the education question. Dr. Stoughton followed with a similar objection. Dale saw his opportunity. As soon as Dr. Stoughton sat down, he sprang to his feet, and proposed a rider to the report, thanking the Committee for the action they had taken, and expressing hearty concurrence with the principle affirmed by the Manchester Conference—that in any system of national education, secular instruction alone should be provided by the State, and that the care of religious instruction should be remitted to parents and churches. This raised the issue between the two parties in a distinct form. A vigorous debate ensued. On a vote the rider was carried by an overwhelming majority. The way was thus cleared for Dr. Conder's election. Some still contended that nothing should be done to weaken the hands of those who were fighting the battle of unsectarian education in the country; but Dale, supported by his friend Dr. Guinness Rogers, insisted that the Union, having now secured itself against everything but wilful misrepresentation, ought not to allow "test questions" to bar the way to the Chair. The appeal was successful. His prompt action helped to avert what would have been regarded outside as a scandalous excess of party spirit.

At the Manchester Conference it was proposed in committee that delegates should be sent to Scotland to agitate against the Scotch Education Bill—a measure in some respects even more favourable to the sectarian system than Mr. Forster's Act. School Boards in Scotland were not left free to exercise their option in paying fees for poor children at denominational schools; whether willing or unwilling, they were bound to pay. In their own schools, the Boards were empowered to provide whatever religious instruction they might think fit; the clause in the English Act excluding sectarian catechisms and formularies was discarded. In Glasgow and other towns

where the poorer Irish congregate, Roman Catholic schools were assured of large subsidies from the rates; the Shorter Catechism might be taught in every Board School in the kingdom. Some antagonism had already declared itself, and it was not unnatural that the Nonconformist leaders in England should desire to secure united action in both countries. But Dale, who was already in communication with friends in Scotland, resisted the proposal, which was withdrawn on the understanding that action of some less formal and official kind should be taken. It was ultimately arranged that Dale himself, with one or two others, should undertake a campaign in Scotland, but without any representative commission, and speaking only in their own name.

The project, when announced, caused no small flutter.
1872. Dr. Cairns begged Dale not to come, or at least to defer his visit. Dr. Rainy wrote to the same effect. Dr. Taylor described the intervention of English Nonconformists as "unwise and uncalled for." Such a feeling might have been anticipated. Scotchmen like to keep their fighting to themselves. The moment also was not altogether opportune. Negotiations for union between the United Presbyterians and the Free Church were in progress, and such men as Dr. Cairns were nervously anxious to avoid all strife till the settlement for which they hoped had come about. But beyond all this, opinion, even among the religious bodies most closely akin to English Nonconformity, was deeply divided. Dr. Cairns, for example,—who cannot have regarded himself as antagonistic to Dale and his friends; for in that case he could hardly have offered advice unsought—was anxious to allow Bible teaching during any part of the school hours, and he desired to retain the Shorter Catechism, provided that it should be taught at the beginning or the end of the day, and with the safeguard of a conscience clause. Though strongly opposed to any union between Church and State, he would have been content with a "declaration" inserted in the Bill to the effect that the rates paid for secular teaching only, and that the

parents' fees provided for the cost of the religious instruction — a wholly artificial distinction; and, as his biographer points out, even when fees were no longer paid Dr. Cairns did not modify his position.[1]

Dale did not underestimate the weight of this remonstrance, but on discovering Dr. Cairns's real position in relation to the question at issue, and encouraged by other leaders, he resolved not to draw back.

To Dr. John Cairns

13th February 1872.

It was very kind of you to write to me, and you may be sure that your judgment against the expediency of my going to Scotland just now has very great weight with me; and I may add that I have read Dr. Rainy's lectures in reply to the Dean of Westminster, who wants to take all the bone and muscle out of Scotch Christianity, with such admiration, that it would be a real pain to me to take a course which he seriously disapproves.[2]

There was a strong desire that the Manchester Conference should appoint a deputation to visit Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen; but I prevented this proposal from being submitted to the Conference, feeling that it hardly became us to take action in relation to Scotland of so formal a kind. But there was an understanding come to privately that Dr. Raleigh and myself and Mr. Hannay with some United Presbyterian minister should place ourselves in communication with some of our friends in Scotland, and arrange, if possible, to assist the manifestation of the feeling adverse to the Lord Advocate's Bill, which we knew existed but which was in danger of being suppressed, as it seemed to us, by the policy of the leaders of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches. Raleigh is not able to leave London immediately, and, influenced very much by what I had learnt to be the feeling of such men as Dr. Buchanan and Dr. Rainy, I had determined to delay my own visit for a short time, and see what course matters took. This is the history of the matter.

Your own position I have had some difficulty in apprehending. You say that you would not have the Bible excluded from the school during "regular hours," by which I imagine you mean the

[1] *Life of Dr. John Cairns*, by Rev. A. R. M'Ewan, D.D., pp. 541-546.

[2] *Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland*, delivered in Edinburgh in 1872, by A. P. Stanley, D.D. *Three Lectures on the Church of Scotland*, by Robert Rainy, D.D.

hours not covered by the time-table conscience clause. Now I have not yet received a copy of the Lord Advocate's Bill, but it is my full persuasion that the Bill must certainly do what you deprecate. The English Bill would permit the Bible to be read only under the protection of the conscience clause, and it is to me inconceivable that on this point the Scotch Bill should differ from the English, and from the Scotch Bill previously submitted to the House. On that point I think that there need be no controversy between those who held your position and the southern Nonconformists.

On the question round which the controversy will move, I should be very grateful if you could find time to give me a sentence or two of explanation. You say "We hope to secure a conscience time-table, and (1) our Church will use every effort to get the rates as well as the grants restricted to secular education, (2) leaving the religious education to be controlled by the local boards and paid for by the parties actually receiving it." If the United Presbyterian Church will really do its best to secure what is expressed by the clause which I have marked (1), there is no difference between your position and ours, except in the point about having the Bible read in "regular hours," which will really not emerge. But, if (1) means all it seems to mean, I cannot understand (2). Why should the local board control religious education—how can it control it—if no public money is used to provide it?

If you mean that the schoolroom should be at the disposal of churches out of regular hours, at times to be determined by the Board, for the purposes of giving religious instruction to those who are willing to receive it, this is the platform of the League, and I believe that many Nonconformists would offer no serious objection to the proposal.

I can hardly imagine that any possible injury could be inflicted on the projected Disestablishment movement by the attempt on our part to elicit public feeling in Scotland in favour of amendments to the Bill restricting grants and rates to secular education. It is quite possible that some—perhaps many—Free Churchmen, and some—not many—United Presbyterians might be irritated by our movement; but for their own sakes—not out of consideration for us—they will go in for Disestablishment, and no hard words flung at us in this present controversy would chill the earnestness with which we shall support you.

The one point on which I should like to trouble you is, what shape do you think the amendments of your church are likely to assume, in order to secure that neither rates nor grants shall go to provide religious instruction? At present—as the Bill stands

—unless it is eventually different from the former Bill, and unless the Lord Advocate failed last night to explain its provisions—public money is to provide for the teaching of religious doctrine just as it provides for the teaching of grammar and geography. I think that if your friends stand by your principle, they will render my visit to Scotland very unnecessary. If they do not stand by it, they will put into the hands of their opponents a weapon the edge of which will cut them sharp and deep when they raise the Disestablishment question.

Dale attended meetings at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. At Edinburgh, Dr. Rogers was with him; at Glasgow, Dr. Raleigh; he went alone to Aberdeen. In each city he and his friends met with substantial support, but the campaign does not appear to have stirred any strong enthusiasm. The same line of argument was maintained throughout. It was urged that religious instruction should be neither provided nor controlled by local authorities, but should be left to the Church and the home. It was at Aberdeen that Dale was most successful, in spite of unfavourable conditions. The audience was thin. The preceding speakers had been overcome by depression. But Dale was in one of his most fervid moods; his enthusiasm was contagious; in a few minutes the ice had melted. The axiom that the orator receives from his audience in vapour what he returns in flood, was on this occasion wholly falsified; the speaker received nothing and gave everything.

The closing passages of the speech produced a profound impression. Dale had warned his hearers that whatever was granted to Scotland in virtue of its substantial unanimity in matters of faith, could not be denied to Ireland, where religious agreement was at least as great, and then continued—

My Lord [Provost], I am not insensible to the majesty and grandeur of the Church of Rome. It has other and nobler claims on our wonder and admiration than those which rest upon the elaborate perfection of its organisation, the vast number of its adherents, its venerable antiquity, and the great part which it has played in the history of Christendom. I have wept over the story of the heroism, the sufferings, the unquenchable ardour of

its illustrious missionaries. The massive and stately structure of its theology, built up by the gigantic labours and enormous learning of innumerable doctors, through a long succession of generations, has filled me with intellectual awe. I have been melted, and I have been thrilled, by the transcendent eloquence of its great preachers, from Bossuet to Lacordaire. I know something of the wealth of spiritual wisdom to be found in the spiritual writings of its great mystics who, in the strength of an intense faith in the unseen, have been able to dissolve the spell of a sensuous worship, and to penetrate through an elaborate ceremonial into the immediate presence of God. I rejoice to believe that among its members there are thousands upon thousands who are regenerate of the Holy Ghost, and whose exaggerated homage, rendered to the Virgin, is the expression of a passion true and deep, though mistaken, for the honour of our Lord, and whose hearts forget the crucifix before which they are kneeling and cling to that living Christ who is on the cross no longer. The saints who have been the strength and the glory of the Romish Church in days gone by have their successors in our own times, and God forbid that I should ever forget that those who love Christ, whatever their church and whatever their creed, are regenerate of the Holy Ghost, and heirs together of God's eternal glory. But against the pretensions of this Church to be the exclusive minister of God's grace and to stand between even the humblest and obscurest of God's children and their heavenly Father; against the assumptions on which her priests and her bishops rest their claim to control national policy and legislation; against the authority asserted on behalf of her chief ruler to interfere in the name of God with the free development of the intellectual, political, and social life of mankind;—against these I must declare my intense and implacable hostility. My remembrance of the evils which spiritual tyranny has already inflicted on Europe; of the cruel sufferings of innumerable martyrs; of the decay of the industry, genius, and liberty of great nations which have submitted to its power; and my conviction of the deep antagonism between the traditional policy of this Church and its theological faith, and the free spirit of the Gospel, compel me to swear eternal hatred to Rome. Never, never again, I trust, will the people of England and Scotland permit the emissaries of an Italian bishop to menace their Parliaments and to control their kings. If we have to fight over again the old battle —the battle between the theology of Rome and the pure truth of Christ; between the pretensions of her priesthood and the liberty of immediate access to God which Christ confers on every one that receives His grace—I trust we shall have the sanctity

and the learning and the genius to win a controversial triumph as illustrious as that which our fathers won. And if the battle is to be fought in another form—if the Roman Catholic priesthood tell us that freedom is not enough for them, but that they must have privilege; if they tell us that it is not enough that the Irish people have been emancipated from the injustice of having to support a Church whose faith and whose worship they reject; if they insist on having imperial grants, in larger and still larger proportions, voted for the maintenance of schools intended to propagate the Romish faith; and if they tell us that in the event of our refusing to concede their claims they will provoke civil disturbance and render British rule in Ireland impossible;—I trust that those threats will but stir the heart and brace the courage of the English and Scottish people, and that we shall tell them that the high spirit of this ancient empire has not decayed, that we are resolved to pursue a policy of justice and of freedom, that we scorn their threats and defy their power, and may God defend the right!

At a succession of by-elections during the next twelve months the policy of the Conference was steadily pursued, and Nonconformist discontent made it impossible for any ministerial candidate to win a seat. With Mr. Bright's recovery and return to the Ministry, after his condemnation of the Education Act as "the worst Act passed by a Liberal Government since 1832," confidence was to some extent restored, and an article in the *Contemporary Review*[1] showed that Dale looked forward to a genuine reconciliation. But Mr. Forster was stubborn, and the General Election of February 1874 found the Liberal party still disunited. However, the influence of the Nonconformists told in the constituencies. Out of 425 Liberal candidates in England, Wales, and Scotland, 300 were pledged to the repeal of the 25th clause, and in spite of the Liberal collapse the League section of the party added to its strength.

Some of Dale's friends were anxious that he should stand for Bradford, where the Liberal Association refused to accept Mr. Forster as their candidate. To such overtures he would not listen either then or at any other

[1] "The Nonconformists and the Educational Policy of the Government," *Contemporary Review*, September 1873, pp. 643-662.

time. The House of Commons he felt to be incompatible with the pastorate, and no inducement would have led him to abandon his work as a Christian minister—in his mind the noblest calling open to man, demanding and exercising his highest powers. He would have regarded the Government bench itself as a descent from the pulpit of Carr's Lane.[1] In reply to Mr. Henry Richard, two years before, he lays stress on other objections also.

TO MR. RICHARD

21st May 1872.

Your kind words about my attempting to find my way into the House at the next election raise a question which has been raised several times by some of my friends during the last three or four years. Happily the question is not a practical one for me. I am quite clear that Parliamentary life would be absolutely inconsistent with the doing of my ministerial work, and unless the impression which I have sometimes had of my unfitness for ministerial work became deeper, I could not see my way to giving it up. Moreover—and this is a kind of consideration for which in times of difficulty one is very thankful—Parliamentary life without a definite and independent income has for me a very ghastly look; it means frightful temptation and the possibility of utter moral ruin. You will probably laugh when I say it—but it is nevertheless true—that I am conscious of a tendency which would almost disqualify me for the kind of fight which you and Miall have so gallantly fought and on which, while I am outside, I look with such hearty sympathy and admiration. What I mean is, that in the various religious and philanthropic societies in which I have got whatever business faculty I possess, I have always, or nearly always, been on the official side. It is therefore an almost invincible habit of mine to be always asking how will a thing work? and to be considering how far I can go to meet an opponent. I always want to find some common ground if I can, on which I can stand with every honest and able man who is against me. I am certain that the atmosphere of the House would develop the tendency rather perilously, and so I think that I can serve the good cause outside better than in.

But these considerations are like the Marquis's superfluous reasons for receiving the King without a salute; the material reason is enough: I have no powder.

[1] Cf. *The Epistle of James*, pp. 288, 289.

Once, and only once, did he express any regret that he was not with his friends in Parliament; it was during the Bradlaugh controversy, when he longed to say within the House what he was saying outside it, and to protest before the representatives of the nation against the profanation of the most sacred elements of Christian faith for the purposes of party warfare.

Mr. Gladstone's resignation of the Liberal leadership in January 1875 led to a new episode in the struggle. Mr. Forster's friends, backed by a large portion of the press, did their best to secure him the reversion. But the Nonconformist representatives met at Crewe and publicly protested against the appointment, and though attempts were made to show that his colleagues in the late Ministry were equally responsible with him for the obnoxious policy, they persisted in their opposition. Dale, who had been singled out for attack by the *Times* and the *Leeds Mercury*, defended the decision of the United Nonconformist Committee in the following letter:—

In your article of this morning on the selection of a successor to Mr. Gladstone in the Liberal leadership of the House of Commons, you intimate that the objections of the Nonconformists to the claims of Mr. Forster are equally fatal to the claims of every other member of the late Cabinet. I venture to differ from this opinion, and for the following reasons:—

1. Mr. Forster is the author of the Education Act of 1870. Whatever honour belongs to the statesman who succeeded in carrying the first great measure for the promotion of national education in this country belongs to him, as it cannot belong to his colleagues. He is responsible for the faults and imperfections of the Act in a manner in which his colleagues are not responsible.

2. For four years the Act was administered by Mr. Forster, and for the way in which it was administered the chief responsibility attaches to Mr. Forster, not to Mr. Forster's colleagues. The Act leaves School Boards at liberty to pay or refuse to pay fees out of the rates for children attending denominational schools. Whenever a Board with a Liberal majority sent up by-laws to the Department, taking no power to pay the fees, Mr. Forster used the whole of his official influence to induce them to pay the fees. The Act as it stood was not sufficiently favourable to denominationalism; Mr. Forster tried to make it more favourable.

3. In the resolutions passed by the United Nonconformist Committees at Crewe on Wednesday—the resolutions referred to in the *Times* article of this morning—there is no protest against the selection of a leader who is responsible for the educational policy of the late Ministry. The protest is against the selection of a leader "who is publicly pledged to pursue a policy which is regarded with irreconcilable hostility by the great mass of the Nonconformists of this country." We are quite willing to let bygones be bygones. We are anxious about the future. In political as well as private life, it is both ungenerous and unjust to refuse to forget the mistakes and even the faults of one's friends. But Mr. Forster has never given any sign of an intention to change his course. He stands apart from his late colleagues and is conspicuous for the emphatic earnestness with which he has made it clear that, while his practice has been to make large concessions to his opponents, he will make no concessions to those who were once his friends. The 25th clause of the Act of 1870 became accidentally the symbol and flag of the conflict between those who wish to perpetuate the control of the clergy over public elementary schools, and those who wish these schools to be managed by the representatives of the people. Mr. Richard's motion for the repeal of this clause, last session, was supported by about two-thirds of the whole number of Liberal members voting on the question, so that of Liberal votes he had a majority of about two to one. Of the members of the late Cabinet, Mr. Lowe spoke in its support, Mr. Forster spoke against it. In the division, five members of the late Cabinet, including the Marquis of Hartington, Mr. Bright, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Stansfeld, voted with Mr. Richard; Mr. Forster alone voted against him.

It is not for the Nonconformists to dictate to the Liberal members of the House of Commons who shall be their leader; on the qualifications necessary for the leadership people outside can form only a very imperfect judgment; but it is only frank for those who have the opportunity of knowing the feeling of large masses of Nonconformists to say, as distinctly as they can, that Mr. Forster is regarded as chiefly responsible for those acts of the late Ministry which provoked the Nonconformists' revolt, that he appears to be just as resolute in his antagonism to the Nonconformists at the present moment as he was five years ago, and that his selection for the vacant position would certainly prolong, and probably perpetuate, the separation of the Nonconformists from the Liberal party.[1]

[1] The *Times*, 22nd January 1875.

The protest was effectual. It was evident that Mr. Forster's appointment, if carried, would break up the party, and his candidature was withdrawn.

The controversy did not leave Dale where it found him. It had made him known not only to Nonconformists in all parts of the kingdom, but to prominent politicians and party-leaders. He had become recognised as a representative of the rising generation in the Free Churches. When the *Daily Telegraph* published a series of articles on Christianity in Great Britain—three of them officially approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Manning, and the President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference respectively, and a fourth written by Principal Tulloch—Dale was asked to speak for Nonconformity; and his article, which filled several columns of the paper, appeared on Christmas Day 1873.

While the strife lasted he threw himself into it with no half-hearted zeal. If he despised any one, it was the man who doubted whether his principles were worth fighting for. He himself fought, not with the graces of the fencing-school, but with the chivalry and passion of the battlefield. His spirit and temper at this time were happily described by Mr. Bright at a great meeting held to celebrate the return of the three Liberal candidates for Birmingham. After Dale had spoken with characteristic vehemence in condemnation of the Education Act and its author, Mr. Bright, in proposing a vote of thanks to the chairman, repeated a remark of his colleague, Mr. Muntz: "What a fine fellow Dale is!" he said; "I never listen to him without thinking of the Church Militant." The phrase, as Mr. Bright repeated it, was intended to convey a gentle reproof. He felt that Dale, in questions for which he greatly cared, was apt to be too dogmatic, too uncompromising. But the audience, proud of their leader, ignored the remonstrance and cheered the eulogy to the echo.

About the same time Dale received even more striking proof of the position that he had made for himself in the life of the town. At the end of July 1871 he was invited

Aged 41. to the pastorate of a church at Clapton Park, one of the London suburbs; and although two years before he had refused even to consider the possibility of succeeding Mr. Binney at the Weigh House, he now thought that the time for change had come. Year by year he found himself drawn more deeply into political and public work which, so long as he remained in Birmingham, he felt bound in duty to undertake. He longed for a life of greater quiet and less excitement, in which he could write one or two books before he died. He also wished to try whether church life of a type impossible at Carr's Lane might not be developed among a less scattered congregation "in the intimate communion of all its members with one another as well as with Christ." He knew but too well all that he would sacrifice by going—in friendship, affection, influence, and above all in "that glorious freedom to say everything that I care to say, and to say it in what way I think best." But he was convinced that for the church as well as himself a change in the pastorate was desirable. Some of his reasons are given below.

TO MISS MARTIN

GRASMERE, *29th July* 1871.

. . . You know I have an idea that a twenty years' pastorate is quite long enough both for a minister and a congregation. It seems to me that no man can have such a varied knowledge of Divine truth as to make it desirable for a church to remain for a longer period than that under his influence; and on the other hand a complete change of position may enable a minister to amend many errors into which inexperience or youthful folly may have betrayed him, and may also give him a new impulse in his work.

At Birmingham the news that he seriously thought of removing to London was received with dismay. Nine years before, when he was invited to Melbourne, the church at Carr's Lane had begged him not to leave them. Now the appeal to remain was more general. It came not from his own church alone nor from the Congrega-

tional churches only, but from Birmingham Nonconformists of every order, expressed not in private letters but in official resolutions. "All who cared for the intellectual, moral, and political life of Birmingham shared the apprehension." An effort, described by the *Daily Post* as "without example," was made and a letter signed by a selected number of leading men in the town was addressed to him, urging him on public grounds to remain.

Such an appeal could not be without weight. Its force was strengthened by personal entreaty. Among the mass of letters that Dale received, one from his friend Mr. Callaway had great effect. Mr. Callaway, who knew him well,[1] suggested that freedom to follow the bent of his own mind persistently—ample leisure to read and to think—might prove a misfortune and no gain. For a nature like his, the distraction of Birmingham life was almost a necessity. "Men of a certain order," said Mr. Callaway, "like Dr. Newman, perhaps, in retirement see angels; others, like Luther, when withdrawn from turmoil and strife, see devils; and you, I believe, are of this order."

After two or three weeks of anxious thought the invitation was declined, though with evident reluctance, and the letter conveying the decision to the church at Clapton was full of subdued regret. To the church at Carr's Lane he wrote with a deep sense of affection and gratitude. Their eagerness that he should remain, he said, "confounded and humbled" him. The letter need not be quoted in full; but a few sentences may be given, if only to dispel the idea that a Nonconformist minister is in bondage to his people and can only preach what it is pleasant for them to hear.

TO THE CHURCH AND CONGREGATION ASSEMBLING AT CARR'S LANE CHAPEL

GRASMERE, *13th August* 1871.

I have earnestly endeavoured, with what strength has been given to me, to illustrate the love and glory of God as revealed

[1] See p. 204.

to us in Christ, and to minister to your spiritual strength and joy; I have never feared and I have never flattered you; I have never shrunk from asserting any truth because I thought it might be unwelcome to any of you; I have tried to enforce most earnestly the duties which I thought you were most likely to neglect; but there is so wide a gulf between my idea of what the minister of Christ ought to be, and my actual work, that, though I thank God that during these last nine years your confidence in me has not been shaken, the expressions of your affectionate loyalty and trust have given me pain as well as pleasure. You have told me what I desire to be rather than what I am.

So far as strength and knowledge enabled him, Dale did not shun to declare to his people "the whole counsel of God."

BOOK III

CHAPTER XIII

FROM EAST TO WEST

Edits the *Congregationalist*—Accident at Carisbrooke—Journey to the East—Quiet hours—Declares his belief in "Life in Christ" and the annihilation of the wicked—Effect of the theory on moral soundness, and on missions—A spiritual revival—Moody and Sankey in Birmingham—Dale's ardour—Attempts mission work—The lectures on the Atonement—Their reception—Newman's letter—Movement for deepening the spiritual life; Dale's attitude—Christian holiness—Visits the United States—"Lyman Beecher" Lecturer at Yale—Letters from America; scenery, schools, politics—New Haven—The University of Yale—Lecture on British Politics; Mr. Kimball's account—The "Lectures on Preaching."

THE history of the Nonconformist revolt against the policy of the Liberal Government has carried us somewhat beyond the mark, and we must now return to the point at which we diverged. In 1872, in the very thick of the Education controversy, Dale became editor of the *Congregationalist*, a monthly magazine started and subsidised by the trustees of the *Christian Witness* Fund. The magazine, as its name implies, was intended primarily to illustrate and defend the theological and ecclesiastical principles asserted by the churches of the Congregational order, but in subordination to those higher interests which concern the common faith of all Christians. For a man already overburdened with work it was a serious undertaking. Dale soon found it to be so, although he was generously supported by his friends—especially by Dr. Guinness Rogers, the most regular and active of his contributors, who twice took charge of the magazine during his absence from home. He would never have accepted the responsibility but for his strong desire to discover

what amount of real earnestness about fundamental questions there might be among those whom he was likely to reach, and for the conviction that he might render some service to the churches by serious and thoughtful examination of the religious problems by which they were beset. The magazine never aimed at popularity. It was not one to be taken up in an idle hour. The class of subjects with which it dealt, and the way in which it treated them, were not such as to attract the ordinary reader; and the constituency to which it appealed was not sufficiently wide to ensure financial success. But its literary standard was high. Its contributors for the most part were men of influence, and they gave it some of their best work. Its ability and authority were conspicuous; and its failure—if it can be said to have failed—was due to its merits quite as much as to its defects. And defects there were; for editors, like poets, are born, not made; and Dale was not born to the chair. He found it hard to say No to a friend—especially when the friend was young. He was interested in many things that did not interest other people. More than once he loaded the magazine with articles that swamped it. He did not succeed in providing sufficient variety or relief. There was very little to attract those who did not care for theology, literature, or politics. One editorial virtue, however, he undoubtedly possessed. He did not stint his praise. When he liked a man's work he said so, and his hearty appreciation sometimes helped his contributors to surpass their own conception of their possibilities. Two illustrations will suffice.

To the Rev. Dr. Barrett

24th February 1877.

You are very kind to say that notwithstanding the pressure upon you, you will do the "Golden Texts" for April if I am driven hard. I am unwilling to turn to anybody else for a single month, for your papers are simply perfect in every way. They are precisely what I wanted, and are done in a manner that charms me. But I know what it is to be under the harrow, and

will free you if I can. I have written to Finlayson, and hope that for this month he may be able to do them.

To the Rev. Dr. T. Campbell Finlayson

13th April 1877.

I think I like your present set better than the last, though I liked that set too. Next month Barrett, I believe, resumes the "Golden Texts"; but can you not go on with something else? I had a note from some man of whom I have never heard before, begging me to try to induce you to go on writing; the man was so earnest that I was glad I could write to him and say that I had already resolved to try to persuade you to write more.

The papers which you have been good enough to let me have for the *Congregationalist*, convince me that you have a faculty which, so far as I know, you rarely use; and personally I shall be very grateful if you can let me have some more.

There were other difficulties with which he had to contend—want of leisure, want of room, and the absence of proper appliances. That he should have been able to carry on the magazine for seven years under such unfavourable conditions says much for his resolute will and his indomitable industry. But the struggle was severe, and he was delighted when, at the end of 1878, Dr. Guinness Rogers consented to relieve him of the burden.

At the time when Dale accepted the editorship, he was already exhausted by the excitement and the whirl in which he had been living. For the sake of the future he was anxious to take a long holiday at the earliest opportunity, and when invited by Mr. Henry Lee in the autumn of 1871 to go with him to the Holy Land, it cost him much to decline his friend's proposal. It was impossible just then to release himself from other work, and he could not postpone the new venture to which he was just committed; but the journey, though deferred, was not abandoned. While it was still in abeyance, he met with an accident that might have been serious. In the middle of July 1872 he had arranged to preach at Ventnor, and at the same time to take a few days' holiday in the island. On the Thursday before his engagement, he made an

excursion to Carisbrooke; and while walking along one of the castle walls, he slipped and fell, breaking an arm and dislocating the elbow. The pain and the shock kept him on the couch for several days. Dr. Halley took his place on the Sunday, and when he gave out as his text, "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken,"[1] the gravity of the congregation gave way. The good old man was uneasily conscious that something was wrong; but the ripple of laughter did not enlighten him, and it was not until he had left the pulpit that he saw what he had done. He was acutely distressed—especially when he found that some present supposed the incongruity to have been intentional.

The results of this misadventure did not make work easier, and it was with great delight that Dale found the journey of which he had dreamed at last within sight; though, when it came to the point, he hesitated to leave his people for so long, especially at a time when there were signs of a great spiritual awakening both in and around the church.

To Miss Phipson

2nd December 1872.

At times my contemplated journey rather troubles me, and I wonder how it should have happened that I should be intending to leave my work for so long a time just at the moment when I have a more confident hope of the manifestation of the power of God than I have ever had at any previous period of my ministry. If I did not feel that the loss of the elasticity and energy necessary for really effective labour rendered a long interruption of work necessary, I should be half inclined, even now, to give up the project. But, on the other hand, I know that what I am longing for is to be done by God, not by me; and if you and others continue to implore Him to reveal His presence among us, my absence can be no hindrance to His coming, and may be one of the conditions of the manifestation of His power.

Aged 43. The reluctance was overcome, and on 13th January 1873 Dale set out with Mr. Lee, and Mr. Wells of Notting-

[1] Psalm xxxiv. 20.

ham, taking Paris, Florence, Rome, and Naples on the way to Brindisi, where they were joined by Mr. Charles Wallis of Birmingham. After reaching Alexandria, they spent a month in Egypt, going up the Nile beyond the first cataract, and visiting Luxor, Karnack, and Philoe, before setting out through the Peninsula of Sinai and along the Gulf of Akaba for Petra, and thence to Jerusalem.

There is no reason to trace his course in detail, through the colossal remains of an extinct civilisation in Egypt, among the wild tribes of the Bedaween, or in Palestine where every spot has its solemn associations. And his letters, though interesting at the time and to those for whom they were written, describe no scenes that other travellers have left unportrayed.

The plan of the journey was admirably conceived. If Dale, exhausted as he was, had gone straight to Jerusalem and Bethany and Nazareth, the emotion would have been too much for him, and he would have come back as worn and jaded as he went away. Or if he had started at once from Suez through the desert, the fatigue might have overtaxed his strength. But the three weeks on the Nile, with continuous alternation of interest and repose, made him a new man. The air was delicious, and in the little cabin, seven feet square, he slept better than he had slept for years. When the time came to begin the six weeks' expedition between Suez and Jerusalem, he could bear the long day's march and the motion of the camel without undue fatigue. And when he reached the Holy Land itself, rich in the sacred memories by which the heart is melted and stirred, he was already braced and fortified against oppressive strain. It was a great experience. The first glimpse of Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives, Nazareth in its ring of hills, the blue waves of Galilee, Hermon glistening with its snow, the gardens and minarets of Damascus, the austere solitudes of Sinai, and Petra with its temples and tombs hewn in the rosy rock—these are sights that a man does not forget. And the spell of the past was sometimes strongest in unexpected hours, and in places where its touch was sudden and unforeseen. The

memories of these months coloured and enriched his preaching for years after. But he resolutely resisted the tendency to exalt material over spiritual associations. For us, as for the first believers, he felt it might be loss rather than gain to "know Christ after the flesh," in the limitations and infirmities of His earthly life, and that we may so dwell on the Human as to lose sight of the Divine.[1]

The journey was not free from accident and anxiety. At Assuan Mr. Wells sprained his ankle severely. Mr. Wallis was summoned home from Jerusalem by serious illness in his family. Not far from Damascus Mr. Lee was thrown from his horse, and dislocated a shoulder. In fact, Dale was the only one of the travellers who wholly escaped misadventure.

The party reached England in the first week of June, after an absence of four months and a half. To Dale the journey had been of immense value. It restored his strength, and left him with a reserve of vigour that carried him through several years crowded with work. It enlarged his experience, and gave him a wider outlook on the world. But independently of these benefits, it removed him from the strain of public work and from the excitement of political agitation at a time when he might have been mastered by these engrossing interests. It enabled him to readjust his perspective; it helped to restore his sense of proportion. More than this, during the hours of quiet on the Nile and in the desert—while the boat was slowly working up-stream, or as he rode by himself in advance of his companions—it gave him time for continuous thought about the deeper elements of Divine truth. He explored new territory, he surveyed what he had already traversed. It would be difficult to exaggerate what he owed to those months spent in meditation and repose "far from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water."

It was not till after this journey that Dale committed himself by public utterance to the theory of the annihila-

[1] Cf. *Fellowship with Christ*, pp. 38-41.

tion of the impenitent. Among the Congregational churches, as elsewhere, the belief in endless punishment had lost much of its hold on the minds of men. By many—perhaps by most—the doctrine had not been consciously and deliberately surrendered; they had drifted from their earlier position, but as yet had not reached any definite conclusion on the subject. Some, however, had adopted the theory of universal restoration, associated among Congregationalists with the Rev. H. H. Dobney of Maidstone; others had accepted the teaching of the Rev. Edward White, who asserted that man is not by nature immortal; that the gift of eternal life is conferred in regeneration, and that although the unregenerate have a life which does not perish with the death of the body, this life, not being rooted in God, will come to an end; those who persistently defy the Divine law and reject the Divine mercy being destined to eternal destruction. Dale had been moving in this direction for some time. Those who had followed his preaching with intelligent insight were aware that he had discarded the traditional doctrine. But earlier experience had taught him not to be too impetuous in attacking common beliefs, and that a purely destructive criticism was apt to do more harm than good. Even when his own convictions had become settled, he was slow to speak. He imposed on himself the caution that he recommended to those who consulted him when perplexed by problems of this order. His advice to them was that after reaching a definite conclusion as the result of prayer and study, they should be silent for a year before they attempted to draw others to the same judgment; and he acted as he advised.[1]

His first public declaration on this subject occurred in a paper read before the Congregational Union in May 1874. After examining the position of Congregationalists in relation to various aspects of theological thought, he proceeded to discuss the extent to which other opinions had supplanted the traditional belief in future punishment.

[1] Cf. *The Epistle of James*, pp. 88, 89. It is probable that in his own case the period of silence was considerably extended.

The doctrine of universal restoration, in his judgment, was then not generally accepted. Very many men did not know where they stood.

The doctrine of our forefathers has been silently relegated, with or without very serious consideration, to that province of the intellect which is the home of beliefs which we have not rejected, but which we are willing to forget. But there are some of us—and to this class I myself belong—who have taken a definite position. We have reached the conclusion that eternal life is the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, that this life is not given to those who reject the Gospel, but is given in the new birth to those who believe and who are thereby made partakers of the Divine nature. We warn men that while they continue in impenitence, they fail to secure it; and if they continue impenitent to the end they are destined to indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; that in the world to come they will not, after suffering and discipline, hear from the lips of Christ the words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father"; but that He will say to them at the judgment seat, "Depart from Me, ye cursed"—words extinguishing all hope and dooming to inconsolable despair; that their punishment will not regenerate but destroy them; that in the fires to which they are destined they will not be purified but consumed, and that from the second death there is no resurrection.

Having thus declared his adhesion to the doctrine of "Life in Christ," Dale did not hesitate to give the subject its due place in his teaching. This excited some resentment, and dissatisfaction was expressed that, holding such opinions, he should be allowed to edit the *Congregationalist*, which was regarded as a representative though not an official organ. But no attempt was made to remove him from that position, and he did not feel it necessary to defend himself against personal attacks. His chief concern was that the theory should be set forth and apprehended in its entirety. For himself, and for those who shared his opinions, the annihilation of the wicked was subordinate to the larger truth of "Life in Christ"; but criticism for the most part ignored the general principle, and dealt solely with the special application. Against this tendency he vigorously protested.

We should remember that this truth is much wider and more comprehensive that is usually imagined. It is not simply a theory on the future destiny of the impenitent. It is a restatement of the relation of the human race to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a reassertion in a more definite and emphatic form of the ancient doctrine of the Church concerning the nature and necessity of regeneration. It has a claim to consideration on the ground that it is rooted in the common faith of Christendom concerning the wonderful character of that change which passes upon men when they receive the life of God.

So far from impairing the authority of the central truths of revelation, the theory was incorporate with the whole substance of the Christian faith and inspired with its life. The doctrine of the Trinity it left untouched. The Incarnation, the Atonement, Justification by Faith, and, above all, Regeneration, it invested with a new and a deeper significance. For himself it had an additional value in its assertion of that essential difference between those who are in Christ and those who are not, which is a fundamental principle of Congregationalism. And while the doctrine was in alliance with the whole circle of truths and facts revealed in Holy Scripture, it did not impair the moral freedom which is the inalienable characteristic of human nature. Man, so long as he is man, can sin, and can continue to sin. Any theory that takes no account of this possibility excludes one of the great factors of the moral problem.

The will of man may be finally and irrevocably divorced from the law of righteousness; as the very nature of the redeemed becomes light, so the very nature of those who have rejected Christ becomes darkness and sin. While it is possible to separate a man from his sin, God's love clings to the man, while God's anger lies on the sin; but when this becomes impossible and the man and the sin are *one*, then there is nothing left but for the evil to be consumed by the fires of the Divine wrath. The final expression of God's abhorrence of sin will be the moral flame in which those who cannot be separated from their sin will be consumed.[1]

[1] From an address delivered at a meeting held to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Rev. Edward White's pastorate at Hawley Road, Camden Town (*English Independent*, 22nd March 1877).

For minds of a certain order the doctrine, he knew, was not without its perils. Such men, while they still believed in an eternity of suffering, were distressed not so much by sin as by the penalty of sin. In their prayers for pardon they sought to escape from the everlasting flame, not to be reconciled with a God who abhors evil. But once delivered from the expectation of torment, they were left without anything to fear. Callous to the moral wrath of God, blind to the exceeding sinfulness of sin, they lost all agony of desire for Divine forgiveness. Their God was less righteous and less merciful than the God of their earlier faith; less righteous, as being more tolerant of iniquity; less merciful, because where there is little resentment there can be little mercy. Error in its expulsion had carried away with it one of the supreme moral truths of the Christian faith. Spiritually, they were poorer in freedom than they had been in bondage. To a moral nature like Dale's there was something appalling in such a condition. His sense of sin was deep and vivid. Sin—not merely as revealed in speech and conduct, but as that principle of evil within us by which the very springs of life are corrupted; sin, whether ours by inheritance, or through our own defect, or by our mysterious community in the moral life of the race—sin, in all its forms and degrees, he felt to be the most terrible of realities. No one who knew him intimately could fail to perceive it. He sometimes referred, half wonderingly, half sadly, to the experience of a friend of his who once asked him what theologians meant by "original sin":—"I cannot understand what they mean," he said. "I have never been conscious of any inclination to do what I knew to be wrong." The fact of original sin presented no difficulty to Dale. He knew only too well the unremitting energy of moral evil, and the incessant struggle against its malignant power. He would have echoed the cry of the Psalmist—"shapen in iniquity," "conceived in sin."[1] Altogether apart from any special incentive, he would never have dealt lightly with the baser elements in human character and conduct; and anxiety to

[1] Cf. *Christian Doctrine*, "Sin," pp. 198 foll.

avert any moral degeneracy in those who had accepted the new doctrine intensified his natural antipathy to evil. At times his denunciation of sin was overwhelming in its force. He never stormed ; but his wrath, as it grew, glowed with passion at a white heat. It swept on in waves of living fire. It seemed to scorch, to shrivel, to consume. And if it was not often that he let indignation break into flame, there was always a certain austerity—it might even be called harshness—in his moral judgment, which strongly contrasted with his charitable temper in dealing with individual offenders ; though even with them his sternness, when provoked, could be terrible.

The doctrine of annihilation—imperfectly apprehended —was held accountable for an alleged decline of missionary zeal among those who held it or were affected by it. So long as men believed that the heathen, if unconverted, were doomed to an eternity of woe, the churches were impelled to mission work by a motive as cogent as supreme. But when the darkness of the future had been relieved by the new theory, then the constraining force was weakened if not destroyed. Such at least was the conviction of those who still retained the traditional belief. Dale never denied the danger. Almost every great truth, he knew, may be, and has been, perversely and mischievously applied ; this truth was not exempt from the common lot. But by example and by precept he endeavoured to impress upon the conscience of those whom he could reach that any theories we may hold as to the ultimate destiny of the heathen cannot affect our immediate duty. He condemned unsparingly the easy and indolent temper which says that we may leave the heathen in their darkness, as they are in the hands of a just and merciful God. That seemed to him "a most inhuman fatalism." Both in sermons and in speeches he often dealt with such pleas. A few paragraphs taken from an address delivered on behalf of the London Missionary Society will illustrate his method of argument.

The heathen are in the hands of a just and merciful God, but so are we; and what will be the sentence of His justice against us if we refuse to send them the Gospel which He has

entrusted to our hands for them? And will not the very fires of His infinite mercy turn to fires of fierce indignation if we make His very love for them the excuse for our neglect? . . . They are here within our reach, millions upon millions of them; many of them weary with sorrow and suffering, and it is in our power to give them Divine consolation; many of them in those heathen lands crushed with a sense of sin, and we know of God's infinite mercy; many of them feeling after God in the darkness, if haply they may find Him, and we have to tell them if they are seeking God it is because God is seeking them. They are men, whatever their future may be. Is it worth while for them to know here of the infinite love of the Son of God that moved Him to stoop from the height of His glory and with impatient mercy to come and to seek those who had erred and gone astray? Is it worth while for them to listen, as you and I have listened, to the parable of the Prodigal Son? Is it worth while for them to be invited, as you and I have been invited, to be the guests of the Lord Jesus Christ at His table—His friends and His brethren? . . . Does God care to have the heathen know in this world all that you know about Himself? Whatever your speculations may be about the possibilities of the infinite future, is not the heart of God yearning to have His children home soon? Does He want to wait for them until they have exhausted the years of this mortal life? Is not His heart touched by the indifference of their hearts to Himself? We have not to do with great impersonal spiritual laws; we have to do with a Person of immeasurable love. He is longing to see the heathen at His feet; and to satisfy the heart of God, here and now, by bringing them there, should be the earnest and passionate desire of every true and loyal servant of His.

But Dale's chief concern during these years was not with theology. For some time he had been looking forward to the possibility of a spiritual revival, and of a repetition, perhaps in a new form, of those great movements by which the religious life of men had been deeply and permanently affected. The Divine method, he knew, was in the main one of noiseless and orderly progress; but from time to time the power of the Holy Spirit had been manifested in striking and startling forms, and such revelations constituted a new epoch in the history and experience of the Church. Before he started on his Eastern journey, he saw reason to believe that a manifestation of the Divine power might be close at hand. He

found that others shared his conviction; that ministers and churches were being stirred in unwonted ways, and that despondency was brightening into hope. When he returned, the blessing had not yet come, but hearts were still expectant. The articles on religious revivals that he published in the *Congregationalist* during the years 1873 and 1874 show how confident he was that the Divine Spirit was about to do great things either within the churches or outside them, and they reveal his intense anxiety that no lack of faith or coldness of heart, no perverse adherence to tradition and custom, might stand in the way of its beneficent power.

He expected a great religious movement; but the movement, when it came, was not what he expected. Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey, the American evangelists, were not at all the kind of men for whom he had been looking; and when they entered on their mission in 1874, it was but gradually that he came to appreciate the importance of their work. When he deprecated hostile criticism at the meetings of the Congregational Union in May 1874, he did not speak of them as he would have spoken a year later. He recognised their spiritual force, but declined to stand forward as an apologist for their methods in detail. He had read enough and heard enough to call forth his sympathy, but as yet he had not come into close contact with the personality of the evangelists or with the power of the movement with which they were identified.

It was not until eight months after this discussion that Mr. Moody visited Birmingham. During the interval he had been at work in the great towns of northern England, in Scotland, and in Ireland. His power and his fame had steadily grown. Wherever he went crowds would gather to hear him. But even then Dale felt no certainty that Mr. Moody's preaching would prove as effective in Birmingham as it had been elsewhere. Some of the evangelists' methods were not wholly congenial. However, he did not allow obstacles of this kind to stand in the way, and from the outset he actively associated himself with the mission. In the course of a few days all hesitation, all distrust, had

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vanished. He was amazed and delighted by what he saw. Night after night, Bingley Hall, which held with ease twelve or thirteen thousand people, was so crowded that it was necessary to close the doors. Those who came were of all classes and conditions. Great numbers of them were profoundly moved. How the effect was produced Dale at first could not explain even to himself; as to its reality there could be no doubt. He recorded with perfect frankness his first impressions of Mr. Moody's power.

At the first meeting, Mr. Moody's address was simple, direct, kindly, and hopeful; it had a touch of humour and a touch of pathos; it was lit up with a story or two that filled most eyes with tears; but there seemed nothing in it very remarkable. Yet it *told*. A prayer meeting with an address, at eight o'clock on a damp cold January morning, was hardly the kind of thing —let me say it frankly—that I should generally regard as attractive; but I enjoyed it heartily; it seemed one of the happiest meetings I had ever attended; there was warmth and there was sunlight in it. At the evening meeting the same day, at Bingley Hall, I was still unable to make it out how it was that he had done so much in other parts of the kingdom. I listened with interest; everybody listened with interest; and I was conscious again of a certain warmth and brightness which made the service very pleasant, but I could not see that there was much to impress those that were careless about religious duty. The next morning at the prayer meeting the address was more incisive and striking, and at the evening service I began to see that the stranger had a faculty for making the elementary truths of the Gospel intensely clear and vivid. But it still seemed most remarkable that he should have done so much, and on Tuesday I told Mr. Moody that the work was most plainly of God, for I could see no real relation between him and what he had done. He laughed cheerily, and said he should be very sorry if it were otherwise.[1]

He was even more deeply impressed by his experience at the "after-meetings," where those who were anxious about their spiritual condition remained to get what help they could from Christian men and women who were

[1] *Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey* (reprinted from the *Congregationalist* for March 1875), p. 17.

ready to tell others how they themselves had passed out of darkness and despair into light and peace. Without the after-meeting, the preaching, Dale felt, would not have accomplished one-fifth of its results. The effect, however, was due not to morbid excitement, but to the power of personal testimony and to the contact of soul with soul. Faith is contagious; and in most cases, he found, these "inquirers" went home with overflowing gladness. To "the typical Moody convert," during this mission, the Gospel came as tidings of great joy.

I had seen occasional instances before of instant transition from religious anxiety to the clear and triumphant consciousness of restoration to God; but what struck me in the gallery of Bingley Hall was the fact that this instant transition took place with nearly every person with whom I talked. They had come up into the gallery anxious, restless, feeling after God in the darkness, and when, after a conversation of a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, they went away, their faces were filled with light, and they left me not only at peace with God but filled with joy. I have seen the sunrise from the top of Helvellyn and the top of the Righi, and there is something very glorious in it; but to see the light of heaven suddenly strike on man after man in the course of one evening is very much more thrilling. These people carried their new joy with them to their homes and their workshops. It could not be hid.[1]

The impression that the movement left on Dale's mind was both deep and lasting. All that he saw of the evangelists and of their work in Birmingham and in London convinced him that they were the agents of an invisible power, mightier than themselves—a power to which they surrendered themselves with loyal and trustful hearts, but which they could not control. The effects of their activity far transcended the human cause, and could be attributed only to the direct action of the Spirit of God. He saw what from the earliest days of his ministry he had longed to see—men and women pressing into the Divine kingdom, not as solitary souls but by scores and by hundreds. One hundred and twenty of the converts were admitted

[1] *Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey* (reprinted from the *Congregationalist* for March 1875), pp. 11, 12.

to membership at Carr's Lane, and this was but one of the churches into which they were received.

The ardour with which Dale flung himself into the work, and his open admiration of Mr. Moody, amazed many of those who thought they knew him well. It was an offence to some, a problem to others. During the mission Mr. Bright came down to address his constituents, and Mr. Moody, with characteristic common sense, insisted that Bingley Hall—the only building that could hold the crowds who wished to hear their great representative—should be placed for the evening at Mr. Bright's disposal, and that he should not be prevented from discharging a public duty. Some who listened to Dale that night as he enforced Mr. Bright's plea for church disestablishment, and who heard him in the same week helping Mr. Moody on the same platform, or saw him at work in the inquirers' gallery, found it hard to understand how he could thus blend political and religious enthusiasm. That political interest should be supreme at one time, and religious interest at another, would have been intelligible; but how both could co-exist, each inflaming and intensifying the other—this was an insoluble enigma. The paradox of his life, one might say, in this instance was focussed at a point.

As he rebuked those who made religious zeal a pretext for evading the duties of citizenship, he now repelled any attempt to slight or to disparage the work of the evangelists. Those who were disposed to be critical or contemptuous found it safer not to indulge their bent in his company. He was not quick to take offence nor intolerant of divergent opinion even in serious matters, but where Mr. Moody was misrepresented or abused, he struck with his full force. He met scorn with scorn. He did not shrink from using unwonted weapons of irony and ridicule. In public and in private he was alert for any challenge, and he fought with his whole heart in the conflict.[1]

[1] See especially the sermon—"The Day of Salvation: a Reply to the Letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury on Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey," 1875.

In the criticism directed against Mr. Moody and his teaching, there was much to excite the indignation of those who had seen the work with their own eyes, and who knew how in hundreds of cases it had helped to bring about an entire change of life. When mission services of such a kind were described as "performances," or even ridiculed as "a religious penny gaff"; when the inquirers' meeting was denounced as a debased form of the confessional; or when it was asserted that Mr. Moody insisted only on the necessity of conversion and said nothing about repentance and amendment, such insults and such slanders called for nothing but indignant contempt. But at some points Mr. Moody's teaching was not free from danger, and Dale, while wholly loyal to his friend, did not deny the fact. The stress which was laid upon the necessity of sudden conversion seemed likely to produce a false impression; for although Mr. Moody never denied that the soul might pass from darkness into light by a gradual transition, he assumed the other to be the normal experience, and that the supreme change would almost always be instantaneous. In a large majority of cases it was so. But the sudden change was so great, and often so startling, that a man might easily suppose, because so great and so startling a change had passed upon him, that everything was finished when in fact the work of the Spirit had only begun. The delusion was fatal to the strength and the security of the religious life. Dale recognised the peril, and resolutely combated it. He insisted that if people thought they could become saints in a minute, they made a terrible mistake. Conversion was the beginning, not the end. Most men when they came to Christ were immature both in conscience and in mind, and still had the very elements of Christian truth and duty to learn. But on the other hand, he urged, if there was danger in sudden conversion, there was still greater danger in delay. Prompt and immediate decision was of transcendent importance.

Through Mr. Moody's influence, and partly at his instigation, Dale was led to undertake mission work on

his own account. For this form of service he had no special aptitude—such at least was his own conviction; though, if he had been free to choose his gifts, this was the one that he would have coveted most. But he had never tested his powers as an evangelist under the conditions most favourable to success, and many years had passed since they had been tried; so when the opportunity came, he did not feel himself free to evade the duty. His first experiment was at Stratford-on-Avon, where he held services for a week. A little later, at the invitation of Dr. Macfadyen, he conducted a mission for the Church at Chorlton Road, Manchester; and again, after an interval of three or four years, he undertook a similar mission, but on a larger scale, at Norwich. His experience on these occasions satisfied him that he had not been called to this form of service; and he abandoned the work, not because he underestimated its necessity or its value, but because he lacked the distinctive powers that it required. For although in Manchester and at Norwich his preaching left a decided impression, it was far more effective in stimulating the Christian conscience and in enlarging the Christian intelligence than in breaking the slumber of the soul, or in turning the indifferent and the disloyal to the Saviour whom they disregarded or denied. The following letters—the first written before he had come into personal contact with Mr. Moody's work—express his own feeling about the matter:—

To the Rev. Dr. Mackennal

22nd May 1874.

. . . I take it that you disbelieve in, or rather distrust, movements associated with the work of special evangelists like Finney, Moody, and the rest. For myself it seems to me that such movements are in perfect harmony with the recognised and general laws of the Divine kingdom. Surely there are many of us to whom the gift of doing very much in bringing men to God for the first time has not come; we may have the power of helping them when they have found Him, but our work needs complementing. On the other hand, I think that there are

men who have the power of awakening men, who can do very little with them when they are awake: their work needs complementing too.

TO THE REV. DR. BARRETT

21st March 1879.

My visit[1] was a very pleasant one—very much more than a pleasant one. It rather strengthened my own conviction that I have no great function for dealing with outsiders. As I came with an apprehension of that kind, the apprehension may have somewhat impaired the work; but every man must be content with the form of service to which God has appointed him. I did what I could. The services were of use to me, if to no one else.

Early in the year 1875, soon after Mr. Moody's mission in Birmingham, Dale began to deliver a course of lectures at the Memorial Hall in London on the doctrine of the Atonement. The lectureship had been established by the Congregational Union in its early days; but after 1860 the lectures were discontinued for several years. In the new series which began in 1873, Mr. Henry Rogers, Dale's former tutor at Spring Hill, was the first lecturer; Dr. Reynolds, of Cheshunt, was the second; and Dale followed him. The Union Committee had invited him to lecture on "Congregationalism," but they acceded to his request that he might be allowed to take the Atonement instead. The subject was one that had been before his mind for many years. To the doctrine of the Atonement he had always attached supreme importance. He had given it the foremost place in his preaching. His friend, Mr. Callaway, in his notes of a conversation that took place early in Dale's ministry, records that it was his crucial test in theology. "He said he considered if a man was right there, it mattered little if he had views on minor points different from the common opinions of our churches." Dale, it may be remembered, had written on the subject in the *British Quarterly Review*;[2] and since then the desire to deal with the doctrine on a larger scale

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[1] To Norwich. [2] See pp. 216 foll.

had never left him. While he was in the Desert, he tells us, he spent many solitary hours in revising the conclusions to which he had been led.[1] As soon as he returned from his Eastern journey, he set himself to prepare for his task, though he did not begin to write until the autumn of 1874.

Mr. Rogers and Dr. Reynolds had published their lectures without oral delivery, but in Dale's case there was no reason for this departure from the original intention of the Union; and he began his course in the second week of February 1875 — exactly forty years since Josiah Gilbert had lectured on the same subject on the same foundation. Each lecture was repeated at Birmingham on successive Sunday evenings. In London, where it is not easy to draw people together for such a purpose, the audiences were considerable; and they were as large at the close as at the beginning. At Carr's Lane, week after week for nearly three months, the building was crowded from end to end without any diminution of interest. Those who heard Dale at that time heard him in the fulness of his strength. And although in later years there were elements in his preaching that as yet were wanting, his intellectual force and his moral passion were at their height. The theme was one that called out his most characteristic powers. He had been profoundly affected by the great spiritual movement with which he had just been associated; and the discourses, as he delivered them, had an intensity of conviction and emotion that cools and fades in print.

The conditions under which the lectures were produced in some degree affected the character of the book. Some passages are too diffuse, others too rhetorical; though the reasoning is always close and the movement of thought strenuous. But superficial defects of this kind did not impair success. The lectures were cordially received on publication, and their popularity has not yet abated. They have been translated into both French and German, and some

[1] "All [the last lecture] came to me—or most of it—in solitary hours on the top of my camel in the Sinaitic desert—natural home, as some would say, of mysticism."—To the Rev. J. B. Figgis.

portions into Japanese. Their praise is in all the churches. Soon after the book appeared, the *Record*—less friendly to Nonconformity in those days than it is now — reviewed it not merely with favour but with enthusiasm. Eminent theologians of the opposite school, such as Canon Liddon, were no less generous in their praise. It has been widely used in the theological colleges of the Church of England; it has been recommended for study by many of the bishops. And although some would give a higher place to the lectures on the Ephesians, *The Atonement* was the work to which most frequent reference was made at the time of Dale's death.

Out of the mass of letters that the book brought him then and for many years after, only one can be given; it has a peculiar interest :—

FROM THE REV. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN [1]

THE ORATORY, *26th July* 1875.

I hope you will excuse my delay in acknowledging the receipt of your volume; but the very day on which you date your gift of it, brought upon me a trial which has confused and disordered me ever since, and has made me remiss in my duties towards others as well as towards you. I cannot even now say that I have read your work through, or studied it as it deserves to be studied; but at least I can say that I have followed its argument from the beginning to the end, and have read large portions of it; and that, in doing so, I have found nothing bearing on its main subject which I did not admire, and that I rejoiced with my whole heart to see so important a defence of the cardinal doctrine of our Lord's Atonement, and such a straightforward recognition of His Divinity in this time and place, and from so distinguished a member of a School so divergent in many of its views from the teaching of the Catholic Church.

In the chapter on Dale's theological position, Dr. Fairbairn has so dealt with the substance and method of the lectures as to render analysis and criticism superfluous; but there are one or two subordinate points on which a few words may be added.

[1] Afterwards His Eminence Cardinal Newman.

In the first place, while the ninth and tenth lectures suggest and maintain a particular theory of the Atonement, the other eight lectures are intended to establish the fact: the relative importance of these two elements is never forgotten; and the book, therefore, appeals to very many who cannot accept the theory with which the fact is associated. And further, although the purpose of the argument throughout is to show that the "moral theory" of the Atonement—as it has been called—is inadequate to account for the fact, and that the Death of Christ involves something more than a supreme appeal to the heart and conscience of the human race, the theory set forth in the book—the "legal" or "objective" theory—that there is a direct relation between the Death on the Cross and the remission of sin, does not necessarily exclude the other view. Those who regard our Lord's Death as a propitiation for sin, also acknowledge it to be a transcendent manifestation of the Divine Love, by which "a change is wrought in us, a change by which we are reconciled to God."[1] The "subjective" theory of the Atonement, taken alone, is not essentially untrue, but it is incomplete. And so the lectures admit that the Death of Christ is all that the "moral" theory asserts it to be; but they urge that it is something more, and that when "the objective element of our Lord's work is suppressed its moral power over the heart of man is seriously lessened."[2]

Only one other point need be noticed. In the *British Quarterly* articles on the Atonement, Dale had laid himself open to the charge of making the Eternal Law of Righteousness independent of God and in a sense superior to God. In the lectures the conception of the relation of God to the Moral Law is so modified as to remove this objection.[3]

The following letters, though written at different times, may conveniently stand together, as related to the same subject:—

[1] Bushnell, *Vicarious Sacrifice*, p. 450.
[2] *The Atonement*, Preface to the Seventh Edition, p. xlvii.
[3] See pp. 218, 219.

To Mr. Wilson

4th July 1873.

Now that I am fairly committed to a book on the Atonement, I am almost terrified at what I feel to be the responsibility which it involves, although for years it has been my hope that God would let me render some service to the Church by the restatement of what I feel to be—next to the Incarnation—the most vital doctrine of the Christian Faith. . . .

. . . I am not very certain that it is wise to attempt a restatement of the truth just now, although I have undertaken to do it. A far deeper sense of sin as sin, and as involving guilt and requiring punishment, is necessary for a true account of the Atonement, than I fear we possess. Even Müller's great book on sin treats rather superficially the idea of *guilt*, and I do not know where to find any adequate account of what is meant by *forgiveness*. And as the Atonement stands between human guilt and Divine forgiveness, it is clear that unless we really know what we mean when we speak of guilt and forgiveness, we can know nothing of what is meant by Atonement.

Some years ago I wrote two articles in the *British Quarterly* on "the Moral View" and the "Expiatory Theory" of the Atonement. I believe that substantially these two articles contain the truth as far as they go, but I am equally certain that something more is necessary. Dr. Halley, if I understand him aright, believes in Propitiation, not in Expiation. The more I talk with men the more I find of chaos.

To the Rev. Dr. Reynolds

8th January 1875.

John the Baptist[1] came a day or two after your note, and I have read the greater part of the volume. . . . You have succeeded wonderfully in handling your immense materials. I don't agree with the *British Quarterly* about Farrar's "superior eloquence"; much of Farrar's eloquence is mere rhodomontade.

My lectures are practically ready. A couple of days will finish all the text, and a day more all the notes. If I were anxious about personal reputation—which I trust God has given me grace to renounce—I should be sorely troubled at the contrast between your volume and mine. I—poor wretch—have been living in crowds, fighting the Tories, fizzing about in connection with all sorts of transient movements, while you have

[1] The Congregational Union Lecture for 1874.

been slowly accumulating your wealth and making it your own by meditation. But I have some hope of making the great truth clearer and more credible to some minds. Hand and foot, eye and ear, brain and muscle—there is place for all in the great body of Christ.

To the Rev. Dr. Mackennal

10th November 1875.

I have to thank you for your very kind and generous notice of my lectures in the *Nonconformist* of this morning. If to any minister reading the book it brings an assurance—as you think it may—that the Death of Christ should be preached as the ground of human forgiveness, my chief object in writing the book will be accomplished. The development of the theory in the last two lectures was to myself quite a subordinate matter, though I thought it might help some people.

I don't quite understand as yet all your criticisms, for which I am not less grateful than for the earlier part of the notice, but I shall think them over. It was a relief to me to find that you did not raise the objection which was urged against my position the other day by a man for whose judgment I have a great respect. He said that he understood me to deny that the Death of Christ had any value as a Divine appeal to the human heart—that I was hostile to the idea that it has a great function in assuring us of the Divine love. Because I maintained that it is not *only* this, he supposed that I considered that it is not this at all. I thought that I had put the case so far as this point was concerned clearly enough at starting, though on reflection I was obliged to acknowledge that, as it never occurred to me that any one could imagine that I denied its moral power, I might possibly have omitted to say distinctly enough that I recognised it.[1]

To the Rev. Canon Bright

26th March 1877.

You have laid me under a great obligation by your kind and generous letter. I have attempted many things, but next to my work in my own congregation, the lectures on the Atonement have occasioned me greater anxiety than anything else that I have ever done. To touch any of the central doctrines of the

[1] Dale dealt with this misconception in the Preface to the Seventh Edition of *The Atonement*, pp. xlv-lv.

Christian Faith is to incur the gravest responsibility, and just now the tendencies of theological thought in this country make it exceptionally perilous to venture upon an exposition of the doctrine of the Atonement.

The incessant claims of a large congregation, to say nothing of public work of other kinds, have left me but little leisure for the wide reading and persistent meditation which a task of this magnitude required. But I thought that I might do something for those whose lives are as restless and disturbed as mine has been. To receive the assurance of a man like yourself that I have not injured the truth I was anxious to maintain is a great solace and encouragement to me. Nonconformist and Puritan as I am, I can appreciate the impulse which led you to write to me as Passion week was coming near. I never go into the pulpit on Easter morning without being thrilled by the remembrance that all Western Christendom is exulting and triumphing in the Resurrection of our Lord. In the presence of the Cross and the open Sepulchre all the differences which separate those who are conscious of having been redeemed through Christ are forgotten.

With the religious movement that attracted much attention during the years 1875-6—the movement for deepening the spiritual life—Dale did not associate himself. He was not present at any of the great conventions held at Brighton, Oxford, and elsewhere, though he followed their proceedings with vigilant interest. In the utterances of those who took part in the meetings there was much by which he was repelled, much that he could not but condemn. The unsound and uncritical use of Scripture, the passion for allegory by which the plain sense of the Bible was distorted with an ingenuity worthy of the Alexandrian commentators, he regarded as destructive of intellectual integrity; the incessant use of luscious and sensuous imagery derived from the language of human passion seemed to him fraught with the gravest moral peril. But he refused to join in unqualified censure of the movement and its leaders. He was not prepared to reject the testimony of those who asserted that through the influence of what they had heard or read they had attained a freedom and a strength which they had never known before. It seemed to him difficult to resist the

conclusion that at these meetings there must have been taught some great truth, or some aspect of a great truth, the power of which was too divine to be impaired by the extravagance and the imperfection of the manner in which it was often expressed and illustrated.

But some of the teaching identified with the movement, though not endorsed by all its exponents, he rejected without hesitation. The doctrine of "Sinless Perfection" he believed to be indefensible. Those who asserted with confidence that they had been delivered from the power of evil did not venture to claim a complete and perfect knowledge of moral duty; they admitted that unattained heights of spiritual achievement still lay before them. But while a man is still liable to sin through ignorance, how can he be accounted perfect? And so long as growth in grace remains possible, how can it be determined what measure of defect involves no guilt? The doctrine of "Entire Consecration" was less open to objection; but when closely examined it proved unsatisfactory. The movement—so it appeared to Dale—had prophets, but had not teachers. Those who undertook to set forth its principles comprehended inadequately the moral authority of Christ. Their conception of moral obedience and of the necessity of knowledge was superficial. They seemed indifferent about instruction in righteousness, and their whole strength was devoted to the illustration not of the Divine laws, but of the Divine promises.[1]

Yet notwithstanding these and other defects, they had rendered a real service to the Christian Church—so Dale held—by declaring that those whom Christ has redeemed are called to be saints, and that holiness even in this life is possible to the believer through the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

To pass from the Atonement and Justification by Faith to Sanctification by Faith was a natural sequence. The subject took possession of him, and during 1876 the doctrine held a conspicuous place in his preaching. He also wrote a series of articles for the *Congregationalist*, in

[1] The *Congregationalist*, vol. v. p. 585.

which he not only dealt with the doctrine of Sanctification, but also attempted to enlarge and to ennoble the prevailing conception of Christian holiness.[1] It was in his mind to reprint these articles in a more permanent form, and he went so far as to revise most of them, making large additions to the original material; but the plan was subsequently abandoned for the reasons given in the following letter:—

TO THE REV. J. B. FIGGIS

1st May 1882.

As to your suggestion that I should write a book on Sanctification—I will think of it; life is short. I cut out the *Congregationalist* articles, thinking it possible that some day I might reprint them; here they are, lying untouched in my drawer. And it seems to me that the subject is of a kind to require the history of a whole life as a preparation for illustrating it. I was a mystic early, but do not think that I touched the idea of true Christian mysticism till comparatively recent years, though I was feeling after it for a long time.

In some lectures on the Epistle to the Ephesians, which I hope to publish in the autumn, there will be something in the direction of this discussion. I am not sure whether a higher conception of Christian Ethics is not necessary before the Church can grasp the truth that Christian righteousness is Christ's righteousness. I am trying in *Good Words* to treat Ethics on Christian principles, and shall probably bring the articles together in a book by and by.[2]

By this time Dale was well known in the United States. Ministers of all churches had read his books and his magazine articles. Many of them when visiting England had heard him preach. With some he had formed ties of personal friendship. He had often been urged to visit America, and he would certainly have done so but for the difficulty of leaving his work during the busy months of the year. But in 1877 he received an invitation that he could not decline. The Theological Faculty of the University of Yale requested him to lecture to their

[1] The *Congregationalist*, February to December, 1876.
[2] *The Laws of Christ for Common Life*, 1884.

students on preaching. The Chair to which he was appointed had been founded in memory of Dr. Lyman Beecher, one of the most eminent Congregationalists of an earlier generation. It had been filled by several illustrious Americans, but Dale was the first Englishman who had been invited to lecture. The compliment was signal; the subject was one in which he was keenly interested, and about which he had much to say. With habitual generosity, his church put no obstacle in the way of acceptance. He undertook the duties of the lectureship, and sailed from Liverpool on 1st September, with Mr. Henry Lee—his fellow-traveller in the East—as his companion.

It had been arranged that he should lecture on the Thursday and Friday of each week, and that the course should not begin until 11th October, so leaving him a clear month after his arrival for seeing the country, and also enabling him to make excursions and to undertake engagements in the intervals between his lectures. Though the time was short, and notwithstanding the intense heat that prevailed during September of that year, he was able to cover a good deal of ground. From New York he went northwards to Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and Quebec; thence to St. Louis and Chicago, and onwards to Richmond, Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. Boston he was able to visit from New Haven, the city in which the University of Yale is situated. Much of his time he spent in the schools and colleges, examining the American system of education with the insight and the interest of one who had to deal with similar problems, though under somewhat different conditions. But he saw a good deal of American society from the inside, and came into contact with all sorts of people. Wherever he went he was received with overwhelming kindness. Busy men on whom he had no sort of claim gave up hours of their time to serve him, and they doubled the debt by taking him to see what he wished to see, and not what they would have liked to show him. Invitations to preach, to speak, to lecture, poured in upon him, as soon as it was known that he was in the country.

If he had accepted half of them, he would have been there for a twelvemonth.

A few extracts from his letters will show the kind of impression that his various experiences left upon him.

To his Wife

CHICAGO, *27th September* 1877.

We left Montreal about nine o'clock on Monday by rail. About four o'clock in the afternoon we reached Ottawa. The ride during the last sixty miles was remarkably interesting. The old settlements lie along the St. Lawrence. Ottawa is more in the interior, and the country about it has been comparatively recently opened. We saw every stage of the process of "settling": the forest untouched by the axe, and standing as it has stood for thousands of years; then the first signs of change—the tall trees felled and lying among the brushwood; then the fires blazing which are lit to destroy the brushwood; then large plots of ground covered with burnt wood, the stumps of the big trees rising above it scarred and blackened by the fire; then fields covered with crops, and the stumps rising among the Indian corn; then fields as clean as in England. We also saw the log hut of the settler, and sometimes the man at work on a new one, and the gradual improvements till the house is as snug as a house at home. It was very striking, and—what perhaps, was most striking of all—after passing through this country for several hours, we suddenly saw the towers of the great Government Buildings at Ottawa rising above the trees. It looked like a dream.

PHILADELPHIA, *5th October* 1877.

We have had a very interesting day. The Secretary of the Education Board came at 8.30 with a carriage and pair and drove us off to the Girls' Normal School. The reception "parlours" are large handsome rooms, and here we were introduced to the Principal (a gentleman), and to the Vice-Principal (a lady), the Chairman of the Board who had come to meet us, and also a member of the Board. At nine o'clock we went into the great hall. Here were 900 girls between fifteen and twenty-one, or a little older, and 350 children, also girls, belonging to the primary and grammar school which is held in the same building. Ten verses of the Bible were read by all the girls together; then a hymn was sung; then three of the girls, according to their invariable custom, gave recitations. After this, without any notice, the Principal announced that there was

a distinguished visitor, etc. The girls rose and bowed to me, and I found that I was in for a speech. After me followed the Chairman. Then the girls filed out, and we went over the school. The fittings are beautiful. In the class-rooms each girl has a separate desk of walnut-wood with white metal fittings —almost as good as a devonport. The teaching was excellent. We heard lessons in history, literature, and arithmetic.

On Saturday morning, the Chairman of the Education Commissioners called for us again with the Secretary and drove us about the city. We went to Independence Hall, where Congress met to proclaim the Independence of the States in 1776; to the new city buildings, the Courts, the office of the *Public Ledger* newspaper, and to an extraordinary dry-goods store kept by a Mr. Wannamaker.[1] Moody, when he was in Philadelphia, had an old railway station fitted up for his services—an immense building of glass and iron. When the services were over, Wannamaker bought it for a store. It is quite a unique place, and you can buy nearly everything—dresses, linen, ribbons, stationery, and I do not know what besides. Wannamaker is quite a young man, and the Chairman of the Education Commissioners, who was anxious to introduce me to everybody, took me to him. In introducing me he said, "Dr. Dale—Manchester or Birmingham?" "Why," said Wannamaker, "Dr. Dale! I can *locate* him: it is Birmingham. Moody was talking to me about you at breakfast at my house last week." He was very cordial. He was very eager for me to go down to Philadelphia to preach.

There were about a dozen gentlemen at Dr. Wallace's—medical men and professors and lawyers and Episcopal clergymen. Such a set of Tories I have not been among for years. They are afraid that the Common School system is educating the people too much; and one gentleman hoped that America might be a monarchy fifty years hence. They were all eminent men in their way, and hated the trouble of looking after their political affairs. I had to fight for American institutions as hard as if I had been in the smoke-room of the Carlton Club, and I denounced their neglect of political duty—denounced them, too, for grumbling at the way things are done when they refuse to take their fair share in getting them done better.

NEW YORK, *8th October* 1877.

We then went to a primary school—a picked one—which utterly confounded me. I never saw anything like it or anything approaching to it. The vehement promptness and preternatural

[1] Since Postmaster in the U.S. Administration.

precision of the children were positively alarming. They shot out their answers like bullets from a rifle the moment the trigger was touched. The precocity of the poor little creatures seemed to me ominous. Every child seemed to me to have been worked up to the highest possible pressure. They were trained to jump up when they answered and to shout their reply, and to resume their seat like lightning. I told the mistress that in England the Inspector would report that the children were impertinent in manner and screamed, and that if the faults were not corrected the school would be fined £10 or £20 of the grant. She could not understand it. Their quickness and vehemence was, she said, "New York life." I tried one of the classes with a reading lesson which they had not seen; they read it with marvellous expression.

BRIDGPORT, CONNECTICUT, 13*th October* 1877.

The parsonage is a charming wooden house; you would be delighted with it. Congregationalism, you remember, was the established religion here in Connecticut till 1818, and it seems very odd to find that the Congregational chapel is still described as the parish church, and to see on all hands that the Congregational minister occupies the same sort of social position as the parish rector in England.

At Yale it would be hard to say whether Dale was more charmed by the place or by the people. New Haven itself is a manufacturing town, with a population of not much less than 100,000. But in that quarter of it where the university buildings are situated, and the homes of the professors, there is nothing to disturb the peace or to mar the beauty. Spacious avenues, majestic elms, houses that are secluded but not solitary, invested with the dignity of age, contrast strangely with the architecture and the surroundings of more modern cities. It is a place of traditions, but tradition has never been allowed to hinder progress or to strangle growth. Among the men with whom Dale was brought into close contact were Dr. Noah Porter, then President of the University; Dr. Fisher, the Professor of Ecclesiastical History; and Principal Dwight, the head of the Theological Faculty; all men of eminence and power whose friendship he never ceased to treasure.

In a letter to Mr. Gladstone,[1] Dale gives an account of the college and its character :—

To the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone

14th January 1878.

Yale is one of the oldest colleges in the United States. It was founded early in the last century, and bears the name of a Governor of Madras who devoted a considerable sum of money to the founding of the college. Bishop Berkeley was interested in it, and gave it the whole or part of his library. It has always stood in the front rank of American collegiate institutions, contesting the primacy with Harvard. At Harvard, I think, Yale would concede that there is a richer variety of culture ; but on the other hand it is my impression that at Yale there is a graver earnestness—political and religious. At present, Yale has the larger number of undergraduates, 1100, to about 800 or 900 at Harvard. I am not sure whether your interest in Yale will be increased if I add that educationally as well as religiously Yale is more conservative than Harvard. And yet the modern subjects are not neglected. It has a strong Scientific School, and an Art School which is gradually making its way. . . . You would, I think, be interested in the life that you would see in New England—so like and yet so unlike our own. One element of interest which greatly attracted me, would indeed have less of special attraction for you : to me it was very curious to find myself among Congregationalists, some of whom could remember the time when Congregationalism was the established church of the State. There is a permanent memorial of this in the constitution of the governing body of Yale. The Governor of the State is one of the ex-officio members of the College Corporation, and it is provided that ten of the members of the Corporation shall always be Congregational ministers belonging to the State of Connecticut. Among the undergraduates I am told that there are the members of all Protestant Churches.

His lectures were a pleasure rather than a task ; no mischance, no failure of health, impaired their success. He preached in the college chapel "to the young men"—

[1] The President and the Corporation of Yale had set their hearts on inducing Mr. Gladstone to attend their college "Commencement." Dale was asked and undertook to plead their cause. But for Mr. Gladstone the time was one of great anxiety. We seemed on the verge of war with Russia. The war fever was then at its height ; and this, apart from other difficulties, stood in the way of his acceptance.

the kind of audience in which he most delighted, and to which he could appeal with all his strength. At a meeting of a university club to which he was invited, he spoke at length on ecclesiastical affairs in England, and stated the case for church disestablishment. Elsewhere he had steadily refused to lecture on political questions, but at New Haven he was induced by persistent pressure to break through his rule, and to deliver an address on British politics. Those who heard him on that occasion, in recalling the incidents of his visit, never fail to refer to the effect that he produced on an intellectual and critical audience drawn from the society of a New England university town. Mr. A. R. Kimball, who was at that time a student at Yale, gives a vivid account of the impression still left on his memory after an interval of many years :—

At the start-off the doctor, who spoke without notes, had the greatest possible trouble to command the words he wanted. He hemmed and hawed and "ahed," and floundered in the most approved English fashion. It seemed for a time as if we were not destined to learn anything of moment in regard to English institutions, so indistinguishable and disjointed was the doctor's rhetoric. But soon we saw a miracle wrought before our eyes. So intense was the earnestness of the man, so supreme was his interest in his subject, that his intellect, all on fire, compelled his halting tongue to do its work. The language soon rolled out in a volume and power that was absolutely astonishing. Apt description and eloquent appeal followed each other in swift succession. It was a torrent of eloquence that had forced its way over the obstructions of a hesitating manner and a natural slowness of utterance. It was a wonderful triumph of mind over matter.

I shall not attempt to give any account of the lecture. That would be impossible. But I shall never forget the scorn with which, to illustrate some point, he used the offer of the photographer to "take your picture with Niagara Falls for a background." His contempt for the supreme conceit of such an offer is typical, as he used it, of the tone of the address.

When he closed, after talking steadily for more than two hours, his audience refused to go. They sat in their seats and applauded, and applauded again. Those coldly critical, intellectual people were seized with all the enthusiasm of an audience

at an opera after the rendering of some wonderful passage by a prima donna. Dr. Dale rose and bowed, but the audience still kept their seats and continued the applause. They must and would hear him further. So, perhaps after five or ten minutes of uninterrupted applause, Dr. Dale responded to the encore, and a most fitting response it was. Greatly overcome by this remarkable demonstration, he began by saying that he could not, he feared, have hoped to receive it, had his subject been "America and American Institutions." He then begged of us in the name of liberalism the world over to be true to our institutions. A blow struck at liberty in America was a blow felt wherever men were struggling in behalf of popular rights and popular liberty That was the responsibility laid upon us by God when He placed our America in the van of progress, and it was a responsibility, he feared, which at times we as a people failed to appreciate at its full significance.

Again arose a great volume of applause as Dr. Dale once more sat down. Slowly and reluctantly the audience left the church. The remembrance of it all is as fresh in my mind to-day as on the evening when I walked along the dark and shadowed Green, and talked it over so excitedly with a friend.

The hesitation to which Mr. Kimball refers was certainly not due to "natural slowness of utterance," but to the fact that the lecture was delivered at short notice and without elaborate preparation. A few brief notes, hardly legible, and filling three or four pages in a small note-book, were all that the lecturer had to guide him. Nor does Mr. Kimball fully reproduce the tenor of what we may call the postscript of the lecture. Not at Philadelphia only, but in other cities also, Dale had been startled and dismayed by the political apathy which he had met with among men whose ability and position marked them out for leadership. It had shocked him to find that in the very home of democracy, among a people that had recoiled from no sacrifice to maintain the Union unbroken, the principles which are the only sure foundation of social security were so widely disregarded or disdained. The City, the State, the Republic, he heard, were tainted by political corruption. Men spoke of it with disgust and contempt. But it was cheaper to tolerate corruption than to suppress it; and the rich would not put public

duty before wealth, while the cultured would not give up their ease to undertake a distasteful task. And so in the United States, Dale said, "The rogues do public work in order to make money, and the honest men neglect public work in order to save money. Judged by the laws of public morality, there is not much to choose between them." In his address at New Haven he preached the doctrine that he had preached for so many years at home, and with the fervour of life-long conviction he vindicated the claims of public duty on the individual citizen.

When the visit was over, Dale did not lose touch with his friends at New Haven. His help and advice were constantly sought both in securing successors in the Chair that he had held, and in other matters also. He tried in vain to persuade Mr. Spurgeon and Dr. Maclaren to undertake the task. Mr. Spurgeon's reply was characteristic. After stating various difficulties that stood in the way, he added—"I sit on my own gate, and whistle my own tunes, and am quite content." At Athens, in the days of its glory, a foreign State or city of importance was accustomed to have an unofficial representative—its *Proxenos*—who could be consulted in case of need, through whom business could be transacted, and who could be relied on to show hospitality to visitors coming from the place with which he was associated. For the rest of his life Dale may be said to have been a *Proxenos* of Yale, and he was proud of the position.

His lectures, when published, were favourably received. Canon Liddon, who had made a lifelong study of the science of preaching, was most cordial in his praise; and it may be doubted whether any other of Dale's books has been read with equal appreciation by men of so many theological schools. The lectures—not without reason—have been described as a "self-revealing" book; and a stranger, unacquainted with Dale's history, would certainly learn more about him there than in his other writings. For although his spiritual and intellectual experiences are wrought into the very substance of all his works, he seldom refers expressly to his own doings or feelings: the personal

note is rarely heard. Those who knew him well could often discern when he was drawing on his past for warning or for encouragement, although to others the words would convey no such suggestion. But here, speaking to younger men, and on a subject that gave him a right to speak for himself and of himself, he was less rigorous in self-repression. "I have tried to hit hardest," he said, "at the evils which have lessened the power of my own ministry." He was as good as his word; and if he does not spare others he does not spare himself. Whether it is of desultory habits in study that he is speaking, or of the intolerant temper of young ministers, or of other defects by which the power of the preacher is maimed and paralysed, he makes his own shortcomings serve him for warning and for rebuke. And on the other hand, it is the methods that had served him best in the study and in the pulpit—though the fact is not obtruded—that he describes and commends for imitation.

CHAPTER XIV

CONGREGATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The Leicester Conference—Action of the Congregational Union—The "declaration of faith"—Dale supports the Committee—The conditions of church membership—Distress at Birmingham—A hard winter—The Wesleyan Conference at Birmingham: Dale's speech on the class-meeting—The *Evangelical Revival*—The defects of the movement—Dean Church's letter—Lectures on Nonconformist history—A campaign for Congregationalism—The *Manual of Congregational Principles*—Attacked for sacramental theories—Defends his position—Sacramental teaching—The Lord's Supper—A return to earlier Congregationalism—Baptism—The Sacraments and church membership—A Nonconformist High Churchman.

THE period of Dale's life that followed immediately on his American visit, though crowded with work, is comparatively barren of incident. Month after month, year after year, he was living at high pressure; and even when he lightened the burden by resigning the editorship of the *Congregationalist* in 1878 and by retiring from the Birmingham School Board in 1880, the relief, though material, was not adequate. He was spending his strength lavishly, as if its resources could never be exhausted. But he was mainly occupied, not in opening up new ground, not in developing new lines of theological speculation, but in spreading abroad among the churches ideas and principles by which his mind was already possessed. The main outline of his thought is already familiar; it is only here and there that a fresh landmark emerges.

While he was in America, the Congregational Union was agitated by a serious controversy. During its autumnal session at Leicester, in 1877, some of its members convened an unofficial meeting to assert the prin-

ciple that religious communion "is not dependent on agreement in theological, critical, or historical opinion."[1] The meeting was declared to be open to all those who valued "spiritual religion,"—an indefinite qualification which gave rise to much discussion. No authoritative statement was made to explain what range of belief the phrase was intended to cover. But it was noticed that in the announcements of the conference the word "Christian" was studiously avoided; and among those who attended it some denied our Lord's Incarnation and Resurrection, and one, if not more, could only be described as a theist. The conference was so closely associated with the meetings of the Union, that it could not be ignored. The world at large interpreted it as indicating a departure even from Liberal theology, and inferred, not unnaturally, that the leaders of the movement would not so boldly have courted publicity but for a conviction that they had a considerable following among the churches with which they were identified.

Whether wisely or unwisely, the Committee of the Union took up the challenge. If they had not moved, they knew that the issue would have been raised by others, and probably in such a way as to push matters to extremes. They had no wish to drive any one out of the Union who desired to remain there. All they aimed at was to make it clear that Congregationalists as a body were still loyal to the fundamental doctrines of the Evangelical Faith. With this end in view, they submitted for acceptance by the Assembly, in May 1878, a declaration of faith, reasserting in brief the principles on which the Union had been originally established, and affirming its adhesion to certain great articles of the Christian Faith. It did not attempt to impose a creed upon its members—no creed, even if adopted, could have been enforced, as each church was independent of any external control. It simply stated in

[1] The object was otherwise stated to be—"The promotion of religious communion in worship and work amongst those who, while retaining their individual beliefs, agree in recognising the existence of spiritual life outside the limits of their own creed."

general terms the theological position of those who composed the Union, and so cleared itself of the suspicion in which the action of some of its members had involved it.[1]

Dale was not present during the earlier stages of the discussion, but after his return he vigorously supported the policy of the Committee. He would have resented any attempt to enforce conditions of membership by ordinance, but he contended that the Union was not exceeding its rights in making such a declaration as was proposed. Its annual assemblies were constantly passing resolutions expressing opinions on questions of various degrees of importance; and he could not understand on what grounds their right to declare their position in relation to questions of supreme religious interest could be impeached. It was one thing to come together and say, "This is what we believe"; and another thing to come together and say to other people, "This is what you must believe."[2]

In the following letter he takes up this ground, though at the same time it is clear that he would have welcomed the withdrawal from the Union of those whom he regarded as alien in spirit to the true genius of Congregationalism; but if they went, they must go of their own accord.

To Mr. Henry Lee

4th February 1878.

About the other question which you raise I wish I could have a talk with you. I do not understand that the Committee propose any *Test* to be applied to all who join the Union, but simply a Declaration of what the actual position of the present members of the Union is on certain great questions. The original "Declaration"[3] was not a Test or a Creed, and the framers of it

[1] Among the facts and doctrines which, in the opinion of the assembly, were regarded as an essential condition of religious communion in Congregational churches were included "The Incarnation, the Atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, His Resurrection, Ascension, and Mediatorial reign, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of men."

[2] *Manual of Congregational Principles*, bk. iv. chap. iii. 1.

[3] The Declaration of 1833. One of the "Preliminary Notes" states: "Disallowing the utility of creeds and articles of religion as a bond of union, and protesting against subscription to any human formularies as a term of

distinctly said so. No doubt the moral effect of the new Declaration would be to drive off or keep off those who are out of sympathy with the central elements of the Evangelical Faith; and for my part I do not see what end is to be answered by an association of men who are not committed to some common belief. It is alleged that we have in the Union men who reject the supernatural altogether; if the Union has not vitality enough to throw off men of this kind, the sooner it is dissolved the better. In churches and in unions of churches I think that there may exist very wide diversities of doctrinal creed, but if the diversities are so wide that some admit and some deny that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind I am puzzled to know what end is to be answered by fellowship. But the subject is too large for a letter.

From this position Dale never receded. He reasserted his opinion in his *Manual of Congregational Principles;* nor did he refuse to act upon it in what might be regarded as an extreme case—the admission of Unitarians to church fellowship. He recognised the difficulty involved in admission, but he held that the very desire to enter a Congregational church implied a divergence between intellectual and moral conviction. The heart, he used to say, is often better than the intellect. His friend, Dr. Finlayson, challenged his conclusions; he replied as follows:—

To the Rev. Dr. Finlayson

Malvern, *6th February* 1885.

Solvitur ambulando.—I see, of course, very clearly that to acknowledge frankly that what seems to me a fundamental principle of Congregationalism requires that the gates of the Church should be open to a Unitarian, may cover our theory of polity with grave suspicion and expose it to dangerous criticism. It is equally true that a theology which allows that there may be a genuine faith in Christ and hearty loyalty to Him where His Divinity is denied is also open to very formidable assault. But those who hold what would be commonly called the Broad theology—I should prefer to call it the Deep theology—are, I think, bound to accept the corresponding polity.

communion, Congregationalists are yet willing to declare, for general information, what is commonly believed among them, reserving to every one the most perfect liberty of conscience."

Can a man have faith in Christ—the faith which saves—and yet deny the Divinity of His Person? You say Yes: I say Yes. And I accept the logical result of the position in relation to polity. I have no copy of the Manual here, but I think I remember a passage, which I suppose is the one to which you refer, in which this is implicitly admitted.[1]

Those who deny the Divinity of our Lord while holding a spiritual relationship to Him which can find no intellectual justification except in the acknowledgment of His Divinity, are of two kinds. First, there are those who have an intellectual life almost as vigorous or quite as vigorous as their spiritual and ethical life. . . . Such men will not, cannot ask for fellowship with us. Their intellect rises in sturdy revolt against our whole intellectual account of our Lord and His work. Secondly, there are those who have an inferior degree of intellectual vigour, at least in the theological and metaphysical direction. If they are not alienated from us by our speculative conceptions of our Lord, while they are drawn to us by sympathy with our spiritual conception of Him, their denial of His Divinity is a dead and formal denial. As I should not admit a man to fellowship on the ground of a dead faith, I should not exclude a man on the ground of a dead unbelief; and I should expect his intellectual differences from us to melt away in the fires of our common devotion to the Lord. I should think it probable that his denials would disappear *before* he asked for fellowship, though his affirmations might not come till later.

I am not disposed, therefore, to give any advantage to those who would build the Church on a Creed instead of on Christ by discussing publicly the question whether I would admit a Unitarian to fellowship. I would leave them to their own light and say, *solvitur ambulando.* I would insist that they have no right to exclude from the Church any that are in Christ. I would leave it to their theology to determine whether any that are in Christ can deny that He is Divine.

But while the controversy in the Union was going on, Dale's mind was occupied by more immediate cares. In Birmingham the winter of 1877-8 was a time of such

[1] Probably: "A Christian society which imposes any other condition of membership than faith in Christ is a sect, and not, in the highest sense of the term, a Christian church. It is a private Christian club. It receives persons into membership, not because they are brethren of Christ, but because they are the brethren of Christ professing certain religious opinions or observing certain religious practices. . . . It is a society not for all Christians, but for a particular description of Christians. It is a sect—not a church" (*Manual of Congregational Principles*, bk. i. chap. iii. 3).

distress as had not been known there for very many years; and the energies of all the churches were engrossed by the work of relief. Almost every letter that he wrote during those weeks reflects the shadow by which the town was darkened. One will suffice.

TO THE REV. DR. GUINNESS ROGERS

3rd January 1878.

How darkly the year opens! We are fighting with starvation here, and at present, I hope, are fighting successfully. Mrs. Dale spends a great deal of time in the depths of the town; she has just come in after five or six hours' work, and seems to have a keener impression of the distress than ever. But we are incomparably better off than Manchester or Sheffield. With us the distress is in patches, and the mass of the decent working people are holding their own. The labourers and the very poor, decent and not decent, have given way.

Aged 49. For several months in succession there is no incident to record. But in the summer of 1879 Dale's influence was suddenly enlarged. In July and August the Wesleyan Conference met at Birmingham. During their session they received an address of welcome from the Nonconformist churches of the town. It was drawn up by Dale, and he was one of the deputation appointed to present it. At this time he was conspicuous as a political leader, and among the older members of the Conference there was no small alarm lest, by unwise words, he should divide the sympathies of the assembly, or even provoke a hostile demonstration. Never was anticipation so completely falsified by the event. The Rev. William Arthur and Dr. Punshon spoke first, acknowledging the courtesy that had been shown them. Dale followed. He took as his subject the services that Methodism had rendered to Christianity in England, and enlarged on the value of some of its characteristic institutions. Above all he admired and coveted the "Class-meeting." Indeed, he said, he had made more than one experiment in his own church to secure what he thought might be a preparation

for such an institution. "You have," he continued, "an institution amongst you of which you are in some sort trustees; we hold you responsible for preserving in its entirety the essential principle and genius of this institution." Then he struck a deeper note.

I think that I am right in saying that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit had a position in John Wesley's teaching more conspicuous than that which it held in the teaching of any of his contemporaries. That doctrine assumed among you many forms, to which I need not refer. It assumed prominence in connection with the doctrine of Christian perfection and complete sanctification—which is another, let me say, of the great truths which you hold in trust for Christendom. Now how much John Wesley did for you and for us by that part of his teaching it is impossible to compute. But there comes into my mind a characteristic saying of Comte's, that the doctrine of inspiration crosses the development of scientific thought. He says that it is quite clear that, according to the teaching of the founders of the Christian faith, the Divine Spirit rests upon every Christian soul. He has said that one great service which the Church of Rome rendered in the Middle Ages was to restrict the area of inspiration and centre it in the Pope. Brethren, we have to undo that work, and to assert in these times all that is meant in the great confession of the old creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

How much was due to the substance of the speech, how much to the effect of contrast between expectation and reality, it is impossible to determine. But it may be said without fear of challenge that the address of that morning placed Dale in an entirely new light before the leaders of Wesleyan Methodism; that from that day they regarded him as one of their most loyal allies; and that for many years there was no man outside their own body who was held in greater honour by all sections of the Methodist community.

Another passage in his speech, of a less serious type, was much appreciated. Expressing his regret that he had known so little of the Wesleyan ministers who had passed through the town since he had been settled there, and with a side-thrust at their system of itineracy, which

moves a man to a new post at least once in three years, he said that he could only plead as an excuse the words of the text, "As thy servant was busy here and there, *the man* was gone."[1]

It was during the meetings of the Conference that he preached the sermon on the Evangelical Revival, which gives both keynote and title to the volume that contains it.[2] No one could have been more loyal than he to the central truths of the Evangelical Faith and to its traditions; no one would have acknowledged more heartily the value of the work accomplished by the Revival of the previous century. Open almost any of his books at random and you will find some tribute, direct or implied, to the service it has rendered to the religious life of the nation. But long before this time he had come to feel that the Revival was incomplete both in conception and in operation. The more he felt that it had done, the more he was conscious that it had left undone. Dissatisfaction and appreciation developed side by side. And by degrees his own teaching came to embody the criticism to which he now gave formal expression. The shortcomings to which he drew attention were pre-eminently those which he had endeavoured to remedy and to remove.

Broadly speaking, he held the Evangelical Revival to have been defective in two directions—ecclesiastically and ethically. It had failed to assign to the Church its due place in the spiritual life; it had laid the whole stress on individualism, disparaging or ignoring the function of an organised religious society for education and for discipline. And further, the movement as a whole had been so solicitous for man's salvation as to lose sight of the necessity of his perfection. Too little thought had been given to character and conduct. In their conceptions of duty the Evangelical leaders had been narrow and con-

[1] 1 Kings xx. 40.

[2] *The Evangelical Revival and other Sermons: with an Address on the Work of the Christian Ministry in a Period of Theological Decay and Transition*, 1880.

ventional. At points the conscience had been trained to an artificial sensitiveness, but without extending its range or ennobling its authority. The Revival had produced a great reformation in morals—it had not produced a new morality. In Dale's opinion it had helped to lead Congregationalism, with other churches, into a wrong path.

> The Evangelical Revival of the last century, while it conferred on Congregational churches blessings of immeasurable value, disturbed the true Congregational tradition; it led us to think that our work was done when we had prevailed upon men to repent of sin, and to trust in the mercy of God revealed through Christ for eternal redemption. Our wiser fathers thought that when this Divine triumph was achieved their own work had only begun. It would be an exaggeration of the truth to say that we have reversed the parts, which in their judgment belong to God and to the Church in the salvation of mankind; but it might almost be said that the early Congregationalists left the conversion of men very much in God's hands, and made it the chief duty of the Church to discipline and perfect the Christian life of those who were already Christians; we have thought that for the conversion of men the Church is largely responsible, and we have left them in God's hands for the development of Christian power and righteousness.[1]

The volume dealt not only with the defects of the Revival but with later deviations from its teaching, and with tendencies injurious to the strength and fervour of faith to which those deviations had led. Here and there also it touched on some of the difficulties raised by modern criticism, pointing to the perils involved in the servile and timorous use of Holy Scripture. But such problems as these he was content to postpone for the present. He did not believe that the time had come to deal with them. He was content to wait until the theories and speculations of scholars had been sifted by experience, and to watch how criticism would fare when tested by its own methods. There are indications of his attitude in the following letter.

[1] *British Quarterly Review*, April 1881, p. 273.

To Sir E. R. Russell

27th November 1880.

I am very greatly obliged and gratified by your kindly notice of the *Evangelical Revival* in the *Daily Post*. With the exception of my book on the Atonement nothing I have published has been inspired with a graver sense of responsibility, or a deeper desire to secure a hearing. I am curious to see how the Evangelicals in the Church will take it. The *Record* has given a notice which evades the issue. . . . Beyond what I have said in the preface to the seventh edition of the *Atonement*, I have published nothing touching the critical questions raised in recent times; and what I said there was chiefly and indeed exclusively intended to show that one may have a tolerably large and rich faith while the critical questions are still in suspense. It was my original intention to put two sermons on the Bible in the *Evangelical Revival*, but I reserve them for another volume. The whole drift of recent criticism seems to me towards the older position. Strauss has vanished. Baur is vanishing. The gospels are receding to the dates which earlier judgment assigned them. But as I want Science to be absolutely free from any control of Faith, so I want Criticism to be free from any entanglement with questions concerning the contents of the Christian Revelation. If I publish anything it will be an attempt to vindicate the autonomy of Science, Criticism, Faith.

The book received high commendation from theologians and especially from Dr. Church, the Dean of St. Paul's.

From the Very Rev. Dean Church

The Deanery, St. Paul's,
1st November 1880.

I have received your volume on the Evangelical Revival, and I write to offer you my sincere thanks for it. I have read it with great interest and admiration. Our points of view on many important matters are very different. But there are great elements of religion, both theological and moral, on which it is a great happiness to feel myself at one with you; and any one who cares for Christianity, and has any sense of what it really must mean, must be very thankful to see some of its more serious truths brought to the front, not only with such force of writing,

but with such sense of their reality, and with such fearless conscientious candour. Evangelical theology, it has always seemed to me, has suffered more than any other from verbiage. You have given it life, and thrown into it a high moral element which it has so often wanted. Once more accept the thanks of one who, if he cannot always agree with you, can go a long way on many points in intellectual agreement, and a much longer way in sympathy.

The practical task to which he set himself was to bring back the idea of the Church into the religious life, and to enforce the necessity of an Ethical Revival—to complete the work that the Evangelical Revival had begun.

As regards ethics he had to be content with doing what he could among his own people and those whom he reached by means of his books. But in vindicating the position of the Church other methods were available. He believed that Congregationalists were in danger of abandoning their principles mainly, if not wholly, because they were ignorant of their own past. And so he turned his attention to early Nonconformist history. In February and March 1880 he delivered, in London and in Reading, a course of lectures on the Rise of Evangelical Nonconformity. The London lectures were delivered in Union Chapel, Islington, and attracted much attention. Mr. Bright took the chair at the first, and as in those days he rarely spoke outside the House of Commons, his presence drew an immense audience. At the last lecture Mr. Bryce presided. The excitement of the General Election tended to divert men's minds from questions of church history, but Dale was so far satisfied with the result of his experiment as to repeat the course in the autumn at Liverpool and at Blackburn. The following year, 1881, was the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Congregational Union, and the event was celebrated by the churches in all parts of the country. Before the commemoration began, Dale published two articles in the *British Quarterly*, dealing with the history and the principles of the Congregational system—in some respects

the most effective of his contributions to ecclesiastical literature. He also undertook another task, far more arduous and exhausting. Two years before, Dr. Guinness Rogers and he had visited the larger towns of the kingdom as representatives of the Liberation Society to advocate the separation of Church and State. At the invitation of the Union they now consented to do for Congregationalism what they had already done for Disestablishment, and in May 1881 they held their first meeting in London. For the next eighteen months their work went on continuously, except during the height of summer. A detailed account of their campaign would be tedious; it will be sufficient to indicate the extent of the effort to which they were committed. Between the middle of February and the end of April 1882 they spoke in London and in Manchester, at Southampton, Hastings, Brighton, at Colchester and Croydon, Bradford and Leeds, Huddersfield and Hull, Southport and St. Helen's, and at Coventry also. During February Dale was also lecturing at Reading on the Atonement. And all this was in addition to the Sunday and week-evening services and his children's class, to say nothing of incessant duties and claims of other kinds. No wonder that at last he gave way under the strain.

In these addresses, of course, he did not limit himself to the conception of the Church; he discussed the principles of Congregationalism under many aspects. But the Church idea dominated all his teaching, and it was seldom that he omitted to refer to it. He took up a positive position. He cared more to construct than to destroy. "I am not merely a Nonconformist," he said: "I am a Congregationalist heart and soul. I believe that it was worth while to be hung for Congregationalism. Men were hung for it three hundred years ago; and if I could serve it in no other way, I would be hung for it now." He drew a distinction between the genius of Methodism and the genius of Congregationalism.

> Methodism is simply anxious to make men Christians: Congregationalism is anxious that men who are Christians

should realise in their church life Christ's own conception of what their church life should be; and we believe that only by restoring the true conception of the Christian Church is there any chance of Christianising the English people, and that the Church exists at once for the discipline of Christian perfection and the evangelisation of mankind. We believe, moreover, that knowledge of the higher forms of Christian life is only possible in a church communion of the kind which the Lord Jesus Christ Himself intended to establish.

For the most part the addresses were not controversial, in the ordinary sense of the word. He avoided a direct attack on conflicting theories and systems; for he held that in dealing with sacerdotalism the most effective defence of the Faith was not controversy but the creation of a type of religious life so alien from the fundamental assumptions of sacerdotalism that sacerdotalism within its limits should be impossible. He dealt with rationalism in the same way. To effect his purpose he dwelt incessantly on the great truths for which the early Congregationalists gladly suffered fine, imprisonment, and death,—principles which, he feared, were in danger of being forgotten, or of being buried under the new treasures that had since been acquired. One of his favourite illustrations is worth recording.

In Gibbon's story of the destruction of the Persian monarchy by the Saracens, he tells us that the Persian standard captured at Cadesia was the leathern apron of a blacksmith who in earlier times had led the armies of the Persians to glorious victory. When Persia fell, their ancient standard, the memorial of heroic poverty, was disguised—almost concealed—by a profusion of precious gems. It is possible for us to preserve the noble principles and traditions of our fathers, but to disguise and conceal them with the new treasures which God has bestowed on us.[1]

He feared that the adornments of religion—music, architecture, eloquence — which gratify the taste and stimulate the emotions, were blinding men in our times to the essential realities of faith. And, while he did not underestimate the magnitude of the service which the

[1] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. vi. p. 293.

Churches were rendering to civilisation in its moral and material development, he did not fail to warn them that these secondary blessings must never be regarded as if they were the chief ends of the Christian gospel and of Christian enterprise.

The shadow of Peter passing by may heal the sickness of the nations, but it will only accomplish that beneficent result if Peter's heart is occupied with the supreme work which the Master has given him to do.

As an indirect result of this service to Congregationalism, Dale found himself involved in a controversy of some moment. It had originally been proposed that he and Dr. Rogers together should publish a volume containing the substance of their addresses. This plan fell through; and after some time had elapsed Dale was asked to undertake the work alone and in a modified form.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

12th November 1883.

Hannay[1] has written to ask me to do two Manuals—one on Congregational History, the other on Congregational Polity. I have consented—with a bar. I want to know what has become of your History. I suppose yours has grown, or is growing, to a size which will not admit of a shilling sale: indeed, it was meant to be, if I remember right, a 2s. 6d. book or a 4s. one. Even in that case, could there not be an abridgment of yours? Please let me know how this stands.

I cannot go out speaking much this winter, for though my throat is wonderfully better and bore a great strain last night very fairly, it requires care. The preparation of the Manuals would therefore be a form of service to Congregationalism, if I can only do it well, that may take the place of platform work for the next few months. I cannot tell you how deeply gratified I feel that the Union Committee should ask me to undertake this work.

As will appear later, he was engaged in the preparation of the Manual on Congregational Polity—the task to which he set himself first—during a time of sorrow and

[1] The Rev. Dr. Hannay, the Secretary of the Congregational Union.

prostration. It was a great relief to him. "It was the one thing I could think about," he said, "when the lightest reading was too much for me." But progress was difficult. The book "moved slowly"; he found it hard to write "in Manual style." By the autumn of 1884 it was completed and published as *A Manual of Congregational Principles*. It contained four books, with a lengthy appendix—the first on Congregational Polity, the second on Church Officers, the third on the Sacraments, and the fourth on some practical aspects of Congregationalism. The Manual on its appearance was received with some dissatisfaction. A reviewer in the *Nonconformist and Independent* expressed regret that Dale should have thought it necessary to include the chapter on the Sacraments and implied that its teaching would be resented; then followed a swarm of letters in protest, most of them aimed at the same mark; and only a month after publication, the committee of the Union, through their secretary, Dr. Hannay, announced that their forthcoming examination in religious knowledge would be confined to the first two books of the Manual.

The precise extent of the antagonism there are no means of determining. But it is probable that among Congregationalists Dale stood almost alone in his conception of the nature and office of the Lord's Supper. He had the sympathies of Dr. Barrett of Norwich and a few others, but they did not represent any considerable body of opinion.[1] The outcry, however, came in the first instance from some London ministers, not including the recognised leaders of Congregationalism. One of these—a man distinguished by practical piety rather than theological attainments—denounced Dale's "sacerdotal teaching" and declared it to be "rank Romanism." The pack at once broke into full cry. It was not Dale's habit to deal with misinterpretation by letters in the newspapers. "Never withdraw—never explain" was not a policy that would have commended itself to his judgment; but as a rule he preferred to endure misconception, and even mis-

[1] Since then Dr. Berry of Wolverhampton has spoken in the same sense.

representation, rather than entangle himself in irritating and, for the most part, futile controversy. But on this occasion—perhaps because the Union was to some extent involved—he wrote in self-defence.

Allow me to say that while throughout the Manual the "Real Presence" of Christ in the Church is earnestly maintained, in the chapter on the Lord's Supper His "Real Presence" in the Sacramental elements is denied. The denial is expressed in a form which includes the rejection of the Roman theory, the Lutheran theory, the Anglican theory, and every other theory that attributes to the Bread and the Wine "any mystical and supernatural qualities or powers." It is expressly declared that "the material elements are only symbols." . . .

Those who wish to give a name to the theory which I have attempted to illustrate may call it, with rough accuracy, the theory of the older Congregationalists, or, if they wish to describe it in a way that will be less agreeable to me, the Calvinistic theory, or the theory of the Westminster Confession; though both the Savoy Declaration and the Westminster Confession contain phrases in relation to the Sacraments in general, and the Lord's Supper in particular, which I should be unable to use because they seem to me to be coloured with the Sacramental theory of Rome. . . .

To identify the theory of the Manual with the doctrine of the "Real Presence" is to misrepresent my position and to create an illegitimate prejudice against it. In the chapter on the Lord's Supper each of the main elements of the doctrine of the "Real Presence" is separately repudiated. Those who find the doctrine in the Manual ought, also, to find it in the words of our Lord, "This is My Body," and in the words of Paul, "The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the Body of Christ?" A sentence, a phrase, isolated from its context, lifted out of the current of thought to which it belongs, is no fair representation of the writer's meaning.[1]

Dale was already in correspondence with Dr. Rogers, whose opinions on this, as on many other subjects, were widely different from his own; indeed, their friendship, one might almost say, rested on unity of spirit and diversity of conviction.

[1] *Christian World*, 20th November 1884.

TO THE REV. DR. GUINNESS ROGERS

6th October 1884.

Hearty thanks for your warm and generous notice of the Manual in this month's *Congregationalist.* I should have written before, but my copy came late. It never occurred to me that in inserting a discussion of the Sacraments I was passing beyond the limits of the subject assigned to me, though I now see that your view of the matter and Allon's in the *British Quarterly* is a perfectly tenable one. Johnson's little book, and Clemance's, and I think Conder's—though I am not quite sure, and I have not it at hand—all include an account of our position in relation to Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and I went on the same lines. I do remember, indeed, that the question occurred to me whether a separate Manual might not be appropriated to the subject, but I thought that, apart from a strongly polemical treatment, the subject was hardly large enough for that; and the only question that I really considered was whether I could include it without unduly increasing the bulk of the book.

I thought a great deal, of course, about the other question you raise—whether what I was writing was sufficiently elementary. I decided in favour of the plan I have adopted for several reasons.

Hannay said that the Committee wanted a book which might be put into the hands of intelligent people to explain our position as well as one that might be used as a text-book. A *primer* would hardly have fulfilled the two conditions. It was hard enough to make the book as systematic and complete as it is and yet to keep it fairly readable. But there was another and a much more serious reason in favour of the fuller and more thorough treatment of the subject. I was doubtful to what extent those who would conduct the classes were familiar with the real ground on which our polity rests. The teachers, in some cases, had to be taught. And, further, if the book was to be used as a text-book for classes, I had to make my election between writing a text-book for the use of teachers and a text-book for the use of scholars only; and it seemed to me that a book which might require elucidation by the teacher, and which would afford opportunities constantly recurring, not only for explanation, but for serious and earnest religious appeal, and which would suggest that kind of appeal, would be a more interesting and useful class-book than one that the least educated of our young people could "get up" without assistance. My experience and observation have led me to two conclusions: (1) that men think that questions of

polity are dry and unedifying—that they have very little relation to central interests; (2) that if they are treated with some fulness of illustration, as related to the contents of the Christian Faith, they are full of interest and of profit.

Now a *primer*—at least such a primer as I could have written—would have been bones without flesh, heart and lungs; and it would have confirmed the impression that the whole subject is purely formal. . . .

I have begun the History, but am working very moderately.

Finally, the Union Committee, with Dale's concurrence, decided to issue the Manual in two forms—as first published, and also with the third and fourth books omitted.[1] Those who preferred the original unmutilated could still procure it; those to whom the section on the Sacraments was an offence were in some degree conciliated. Perhaps no simpler way of escape from a difficult position could have been devised. Dale did not feel himself aggrieved by the action of the Committee; they certainly had no ground of complaint against him. His sacramental theories were well known when he was asked to undertake the work, and it could hardly have been imagined that he would think the Manual complete without some reference to the Lord's Supper and to Baptism. The precedents were all on his side. Silence on these points would have been regarded as strange and inexplicable.

Any adequate discussion of his position in relation to the Sacraments, and to the Lord's Supper in particular, would lead us far afield; and yet the sacramental element in his teaching is so distinct, so characteristic, that it cannot pass without some notice. All that can be attempted is to indicate the position that he held, without entering into the arguments by which he maintained it.[2] The great majority of modern Congregationalists were, he admitted, Zwinglians of the purest type. They believed the Eucharist to be a commemorative rite and nothing more. Or, preferring theories closely akin to Zwingli's,

[1] *Congregational Church Polity*, 1885.

[2] Many sentences and phrases taken from the essay in *Ecclesia* (see p. 216, n. 1) or from the Manual have been used without marks of quotation in the latter part of this chapter.

they regarded the rite as "didactic"—a picture lesson showing forth the Sacrifice of Christ—or as "impressive" —an appeal to emotions that language unaided could never reach. With such conceptions of the Lord's Supper, Dale was dissatisfied. He felt that the theory had been developed under hostile influences, and that most of those who accepted it had been forced into that position by anxiety to avoid giving any advantage to doctrines with which they were in conflict. In their eagerness to secure a scientific frontier they had abandoned large provinces of truth to defend themselves more securely against error. In their recoil from materialistic conceptions of the Eucharist they had gone to the other extreme — had denied its objective character altogether, and had placed it on the same level and in the same class with the ordinary acts of worship.

He himself held that the Sacraments—the Lord's Supper and Baptism—were not human institutions but Divine. A Sacrament, as he understood it, was an act originating with God, not with man. Between the Lord's Supper, therefore, and acts of worship the difference was fundamental and profound. In worship, in praise and prayer, we use words—which are symbols—to express our relation to God; in the Eucharist, Christ—in a symbolic form—represents His relation to us. He instituted the ordinance to represent Himself and His benefits, not to represent our faith and our love. Worship is a tribute that man renders to God. But when we come to the Lord's Table we come not to give but to receive.

The form of the rite is symbolic. The material elements—the bread and the wine—are only symbols; but the rite itself is an act. And the act of Christ when He places these elements in our hands is a spiritual reality. It represents a real transfer of power. This distinction between a symbolic act and an effective act Dale illustrated in various ways.

A key is a very natural symbol of possession, but when the governor of a city hands the keys of the gates to the general of a

besieging army, he does something more than perform a mere didactic ceremony; by the surrender of the visible symbol he surrenders the city itself. A book is a natural symbol of the occupations and duties of the head of a religious house, and a staff of the duties of a bishop or shepherd of the flock; but when a book is placed in the hands of a man elected abbot, and a staff in the hands of a man elected bishop, the act is not intended simply to give the abbot and the bishop symbolic instruction as to their future duties—it is intended actually to convey to them, by a visible and impressive ceremony, the duties and responsibilities of their office.

If the Lord's Supper had been instituted by ourselves to commemorate Christ, the whole service, and not the elements alone, would have been symbolic. To recur to the old illustration: if a soldier in the ranks of a besieging army hands a great key to his own general, the act is symbolic as well as the key. It is simply the expression of the confidence and hope of a man having no authority to surrender the city that the city will soon be taken. It is a mere dramatic ceremony. . . . But when the governor of the city does the same thing, the act is a dramatic ceremony no longer. Its value does not lie in the impressiveness and scenic solemnity with which it may be accompanied; it represents a real transfer of power.[1]

If the act of Christ is a spiritual reality and not symbolic, what is it that He transfers in the Eucharist? He communicates to the Church whatever is represented by the Bread and the Wine—His Body and His Blood. The rite expresses the truth which our Lord was constantly asserting during His ministry—that He had come to give men eternal life, and that this life is in Himself.

When it is said that Christ became flesh, it is meant that He became man in the completeness of man's nature. In what He became He included the lower as well as the higher elements of our complex life. His very Flesh was penetrated with the life of the Son of God. And He not only gave His Flesh for the world in sacrifice, He gave His Flesh to the world for its life. What He gives us is His own eternal life as that life was limited and conditioned by the assumption of humanity. "The flesh" itself "profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63), but the eternal life which became flesh, which is known to us through its manifestation in

[1] *Manual of Congregational Principles*, book iii. chap. iii. 3, pp. 153, 154; *Ecclesia*, first series, pp. 387, 388.

the flesh, is the most glorious of all blessings. He gives us this in giving us the symbol of His broken Body. As we have sinned, the life could not become ours except through His death as the Sacrifice for the sin of the world.

The two ideas of life and sacrifice are, if possible, still more vividly expressed by the Cup. It was the belief of the Jews that the life of a living creature is in its blood; they abstained from blood for that reason. . . . The life, they said, is in the blood; for a man to drink the blood of an animal would be to receive a life baser than his own. But it is to this very principle that Christ appeals in His discourse in John.[1] His life is a Diviner life than the common life of man; to drink His blood is to receive the Diviner life that is in Him.[2]

This conception of the Sacrament affects the heart as well as the mind. When faith is strong and happy, our theory of the rite and its meaning does not diminish the blessing that it brings. But a defective theory may repress the freedom and cloud the joy of the Christian heart. And Dale found in many cases that the new idea, when firmly grasped, transformed the character of the service; that it created a "delight in coming to the service to *receive*, not to seek by intense and passionate desire, or to realise by an exhausting effort of thought the blessings represented by the symbols"; that it effected a happy transition to the freedom of faith. He was confirmed in this conviction by letters from members of his church testifying to this experience. One wrote:—

I should like to tell you . . . how much joy and relief the explanation of the Lord's Supper, which you gave in the spring, has brought to me. [It] has transformed the whole service, making it the source of a new and inexhaustible gladness. It seems strange that I should not have thought of it in that way before; for while I was looking upon it merely as a memorial service to which I must bring concentrated thought and effort, and in which I must appropriate Christ, I was conscious of an uneasy feeling that I did not enjoy it as I ought.[3]

This theory, as already pointed out, was no new develop-

[1] John vi. 53, 54.
[2] *Manual of Congregational Principles*, loc. cit.
[3] The *Congregationalist*, January 1885, p. 20.

ment, but a return to the position of the earlier Congregationalists. Dale contrasted the Congregational Union Declaration of 1833 with the Savoy Declaration of 1658, drawn up by the great Congregationalists of the Commonwealth—Owen, Goodwin, Nye, Bridge, Caryl, Greenhill, fierce anti-Romanists, fierce anti-Anglicans—and accepted by the representatives of the Congregational churches of England. He hoped—he believed—that there were signs of a return to the older theory. But he could not adopt the language of the Savoy theologians without qualification, and he vehemently protested against the restriction—was it here that he showed his "sacerdotalism"?—that neither Baptism nor the Lord's Supper "may be dispensed by any but a minister of the word lawfully called."[1] The Sacraments, he held, belonged to the Church, not to a priesthood.

Dale's position with regard to Baptism may be more briefly dealt with. He believed it to be a Sacrament—a visible symbol of a Divine act; a revelation of the authority and grace of Christ, not a declaration of our obedience and love. The rite, therefore, could not be a dedication—by the parent, in the case of infants, or by adults of themselves. In Baptism Christ claims us as His subjects, as those whom He has redeemed: it affirms a relation already existing; it does not create a new relation.

> Baptism, when administered to a child, is a declaration that the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ has atoned for its future sins; that, apart from its own choice, the child belongs to Him; and that, by the purpose and will of God, the child is blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Baptism does not make these great things true; it declares that they are true; they are as true before Baptism as after it. . . . Baptism, when administered to an adult, is a visible assurance of the same great blessings that it assures to a child. It does not confer on him the blessings of the Christian redemption, but declares that they are his. It is a wonderful gospel—a gospel to him individually. If he has genuine faith he will receive it with immeasurable joy. He will look back upon the day of his baptism as kings look

[1] *Ecclesia*, first series, p. 368.

back upon the day of their coronation. It was the visible, external transition from awful peril to eternal safety in the love and power of Christ. It divided his old life in sin from his new life in God. He will speak of the hour when he was "baptized into Christ" (Gal. iii. 27), was "cleansed by the washing of water with the word" (Eph. v. 26), was "buried with [Christ] in baptism" (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12), and was "raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead" (Col. ii. 12). But kings are not made kings by being crowned; they are crowned because they are already kings: their coronation is only the assurance that the power and greatness of sovereignty are theirs. And it is not by baptism that we are made Christ's inheritance; it is because we are Christ's inheritance that we are baptized.[1]

While Dale attached so large an importance to the rite of Communion and to a true conception of its nature, he was not so rigid in his sacramental principles as to exclude from church membership those who denied its permanent obligation. He thought that they were in error; he felt that they were cutting themselves off from a source of spiritual refreshment and strength; but their loss, in his opinion, should not be allowed to debar them from Christian fellowship. The following letter, written to a brother minister, discusses the question as a whole, and also in some special applications.

To the Rev. C. S. Horne

4th October 1892.

Whatever troubles you troubles me. I shall be very grateful to you for writing to me if anything I can say in answer is of the slightest assistance in pointing the way to a solution of your difficulty.

A few years ago—five or six—we had a question raised at Carr's Lane which in some of its elements is akin to yours. A man who had been for some years in the congregation, who was well known and very active in some branches of church work, applied to me for membership, but stated that he could not con-

[1] *Lectures on the Ephesians*, pp. 359, 360, as modified in the *Manual of Congregational Principles*, book iii. chap. ii. note 3. See also the *Congregationalist*, 1873, pp. 641 foll.: "The Relation of Children to the Church."

scientiously attend the Lord's Supper. That our Lord instituted the service he had no doubt; but he thought that the corruptions and superstitions which have gathered round it plainly indicate that the time has come for ceasing to observe it. This, he thought, must be our Lord's present thought. The brazen serpent had been in its time a divinely appointed symbol of Divine grace: when it had become an object of superstitious reverence, a wise king destroyed it. He said that he himself—if he came to the Lord's table—would be unable to dismiss the feeling of awe and mystery—superstitious awe and mystery—with which the dark and evil days of the Church had regarded it.

I was clear that this ought not to prevent us from receiving him into membership. He was a Christian man, and this was enough in my judgment to require—not merely to permit—us to receive him. But I was beaten at the church meeting by a vote of ten or twenty to one. It was a perfectly beautiful meeting. The respect and affection of the people for myself, personally and officially; their resolute determination to walk in the light which came to them; their sense of immediate responsibility to Christ; their consideration for those who differed from them, touched the ideal. It is a night on which I look back with thankfulness and joy. The man concerned was equally admirable; he went on with all his work as if nothing had happened.

I am with you, therefore, completely on the first point—that a man may not only have what most of us would regard as a defective theory of the Sacraments—for this is not the question at issue—but may refuse as a matter of conscience to take part in them and yet have a clear claim as a brother in Christ to a place in "the august society of saints."

But the question of *office* raises considerations of an altogether different character. A man may be disqualified for office by very many things which do not disqualify him for membership. For example, grave ignorance of Christian truth—or very flagrant misconceptions of particular elements of the Christian gospel—disqualify for the office of pastor. For the pastorate personal faith and godliness are not enough, though they are enough for membership. In a Congregational church, accustomed to celebrate the Lord's Supper and believing in its appointment by Christ, the uniform absence of the pastor would be so severe a loss and discouragement that the church would, in my judgment, be in the right to regard a man as disqualified for the office if he had conscientious objections against the institution. I do not say that the rule is so rigid as to be uniformly applicable. If a man had been an effective pastor of a church for many years

and was effective still, the church might resolve to continue him in office though he had come to disbelieve in the duty of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and had even, like my friend, come to believe in the duty of abstaining from celebration. Perhaps, however, you remember—though, of course, I do not quote it as a precedent of any authority—that Emerson had to resign the pastorate of the Second Church in Boston—a Unitarian church—because he had reached a position in which he could no longer take part in the service; he found its symbolism repellent or at least alien. I should certainly, however, except in cases which I could hardly imagine, object to the *election* of a man as minister of a Congregational church who could not take part in the Lord's Supper.

But how about a deacon?—I am less clear; but I incline to the judgment that a church should hesitate to elect a man as deacon who, however conscientiously, disparages and discourages by his example the maintenance of what most Christian men find to be a service of supreme blessedness and power—a service which, in the judgment of the Church as a whole, is a divinely-instituted declaration and protection of the very substance of the gospel. If, on the other hand, a man had long served the church in the diaconate the church might well decline to dislodge him because he had, as he thought, discovered that the institution never had any authority from Christ or had lost it. As I should hesitate about *electing* a deacon who held the position I have supposed, I should hesitate still more about bringing such a man into the church—however excellent—with the view of electing him. If there were *no* peculiarity of opinion and practice I should hesitate to do it. It does not seem to me to be quite in harmony with what is due to the church to take a man who is out of membership in order to put him into office. The case is not one in which a man is a member of another church, or has accidentally and recently dropped out of membership, but of one, as I understand, whose conception of the Church and its institutions—though it does not prevent him from sharing in your worship and in much of your work—has prevented him from entering into membership.

The true course seems to me to be to withdraw the name, without prejudice to the principle involved in proposing it, in order that you may all have the opportunity of thinking it over. The Friends have, I believe, a most excellent practice: they do not act by majorities, but wait till it is apparent that a course has been proposed which has "the general judgment" of the meeting. At Carr's Lane I have, from the very beginning, shrunk from settling questions by majorities. In more than one

important matter about which I cared a great deal I waited till the minority was practically dissolved.

I do not suppose that this letter can be of any service beyond that of assisting your own investigation of the subject; but if you think it would be of any good to show it privately to any of your friends you are at liberty to do so.

The controversy with the Union and its committee, it is pleasant to record, left no unfriendly feeling. When, after a long interval of silence due to broken health, Dale again appeared on the Union platform, he received a welcome that went to his heart. His brethren knew that he was eager to serve them, even if they could not always approve the service in the form that it took.

By his lectures on the Atonement Dale had joined hands with Evangelical Churchmen. The sacramental teaching of his essay in *Ecclesia* and of the Manual gave him a strong hold upon the sympathies of a considerable section of the High Church party. They were very far indeed from accepting his position. But they felt that he was at one with them in the objective reality which he attributed to the Sacraments. And although from their point of view they regarded his conception of the Church as both historically and spiritually defective, they were conscious that he too held the Church as something higher and nobler than any human institution, however venerable and illustrious, and that in some ways he approached more closely to their principles than those whose loyalty was centred in the Establishment rather than in the Church. They understood him and respected him, though they did not agree with him.

He was sometimes described as a High Churchman, and he did not resent the description. Once he was identified with one of their leaders in rather an odd way. Mrs. Dale, when making a call on a poor woman in her district, whom she had not visited for some time, explained that she had been away from the town. "Ah! yes," said the woman; "you've been to see your poor husband that's in prison, I suppose. Your husband's in prison because he's a Ritualist, isn't he?" "Why, no," said Mrs. Dale.

"Well," said the woman, "these parsons ought to obey the laws as well as other folks; and if they want to carry on their Ritualising they ought to go to the Roman Catholics, where they can carry it on much more convenient." Mrs. Dale was still puzzled, and it was not till she was on her way home that it struck her that her husband had been confused with the Rev. T. Pelham Dale, who had been imprisoned a few months before.

CHAPTER XV

CHURCH AND STATE

Miall's influence—The Establishment an obstacle to the true idea of the Church—Articles in the *Patriot* on theories of Church and State—Hooker's theory: the identity of Church and State—Gladstone's theory of national religion—Chalmers—Paley—Renewed activity of the Liberation Society in 1872—Campaign with Dr. Guinness Rogers—Criticism of the *Times* and of Matthew Arnold—The social schism—The Church as the authorised teacher of religion—Parliament and ecclesiastical legislation—Stereotyped religion—Church property national property—Personal responsibility of the citizen for the existence of the Establishment—Letters on disestablishment and disendowment—Episcopacy and unity—Comprehension—Free Church Federation.

IN the public mind Dale was so closely associated with the question of disestablishment, and his own conviction of the wisdom and justice of that policy was so strong that some reference must be made to the subject. But the materials are comparatively slight. He wrote few letters dealing even indirectly with the question; he very rarely preached on the principles involved in it; he felt indeed that he had said less about it than he should.

In the early years of his ministry, and before his ministry began, Mr. Miall's influence, as he has told us, strongly affected him. When he came to know Mr. Miall himself, he was even more deeply impressed by his character and personality. In both men there was an element of mysticism, combined with a strong ethical passion. Both lived habitually under the control of things unseen. But in Miall, as Dale discovered, there was a rare remoteness and detachment from the visible order; and in the memorial sermon preached after Miall's death, he laid great stress on this habit of mind. With most men, he

said, God descends to dwell with them; in Miall's case human thought and life were lifted to loftier realms of being. "Instead of God living where he lived, he lived where God lived." "He looked upon the perpetual flux of human affairs from the everlasting hills. His thoughts did not wander through eternity — they dwelt there." Even in the years of struggle and storm this spiritual isolation was unbroken.

He stood before his audience detached and isolated. It was not from them that he received his impulse and his strength. With a great crowd about him, his thought was still moving in remote and lonely regions—"Where Time's far-wandering stream has never run." He gave one the impression that he had authentic tidings from unseen worlds. His appeal was, therefore, not so much to his audience, as to the individual men of whom it was composed, and to what was highest in every one of them. He believed that the human soul, if it can be separated from the tumults and excitements which commonly disturb it, cannot refuse to respond to the voice of righteousness and truth; and this faith acted like a spell upon those who heard him. Each man felt that he stood apart from the throng, and that the appeal of the speaker was to his own conscience and judgment.[1]

Dale caught something of this spirit. Though less detached from human affairs, he was impelled by the religious motive. He too was wont to appeal to the higher and nobler elements in human character, and instinctively avoided those mean and petty issues by which a great controversy is too often degraded. He, like his leader, believed with his whole heart that in attacking the position of the Established Church, Nonconformists must aim, not so much to right themselves as to right Christianity. But he was very far from Miall's individualism. Miall's supreme interest lay in God on the one hand, in the individual soul on the other. "Compared with them, all institutions, whether secular or sacred, were insignificant. Nations and churches existed for the sake of individual man." In Dale's thought the Church and the nation held a higher place. He considered them to be

[1] Memorial sermon at the Weigh-House Chapel, *Nonconformist and Independent*, 19th May 1881.

essential, not secondary. And attaching, as he did, the highest importance to the true conception of the Church and its functions, he contended against the maintenance of a national church, because in his view it stood in the way of the true idea of the Church; and only as that idea prevailed had he any hope of the nation becoming Christian in reality as well as in name.

He believed, therefore, that if Christianity were to exert its full power over the English people—not for civilisation but for conversion—the Church as by law established must cease to be.

He became a member of the Liberation Society about the year 1860, and took some part in its operations. His first appearance in its larger assemblies was at the conference in London in 1862. Those early speeches have long since ceased to have either interest or importance. But in a series of articles contributed to the *Patriot* in the year 1863, Dale discussed some of the theories propounded by representative advocates of the union of Church and State; and his criticism clearly indicates the basis on which he rested his objection to established churches and to schemes of ecclesiastical comprehension.[1] The theories examined are those of Hooker, Gladstone, Paley, Chalmers, and Warburton, each representing a different school of thought.

Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, contended that the Church has power to decree rites and ceremonies; and further, that this power may rightly be vested in the Crown and Parliament. He distinguished between the visible and the invisible Church. Of the visible Church, all men who profess the Christian faith, whatever their varieties of spiritual condition, are members; and when a nation by external profession acknowledges Christ as its Lord and Head, the nation itself becomes a Church. So in the realm of England, the Church and the State cannot be described as being in alliance with one another; they are really identical. As the State represents the commonwealth in relation to secular affairs, so the Church represents

[1] *The Patriot*, 1863: January 8, 22; February 5, 26; March 19.

the commonwealth in relation to spiritual affairs. The will of the Church, therefore, as Hooker conceived it, acts through the same government as the will of the nation: ecclesiastical laws and secular laws alike express the will of the nation in its two functions; and legislative authority in either case is originally vested in all the members of the community. "Our laws," he says, "made concerning religion do take originally their essence from the power of the whole realm and Church of England." The nation, therefore, can exercise its authority through its representatives.

Such a theory, Dale argued, is wholly inconsistent with the ideas and principles of the New Testament, in which the Christian Church is an essentially religious organisation. Hooker's theory destroys Christian Churches, and replaces them by nominally Christian nations. So radical a change cannot be defended as a mere development of polity, such as may be justified by altered conditions and circumstances; it involves the transfer of powers and prerogatives from one community to another, differing from it in characteristics so fundamental as the conditions of membership, the ends of its activity, the sanction on which it rests, and the methods on which it relies for support.

The churches founded by Apostles were societies constituted of persons who by their free and voluntary act entered into religious fellowship with each other; a nation is a society constituted of persons who, only by a fiction constructed for the sake of a theory, can be said to have entered it, or to remain in it of their own free will. The churches founded by Apostles were established for strictly spiritual purposes; a nation has a thousand inferior objects to secure, and its entire organisation is constructed with a view to these inferior ends. The churches founded by Apostles exercised no secular and political power in maintaining the authority of spiritual law; but a nation cannot divest its acts of a secular and political character. The churches founded by Apostles derived their pecuniary support from the voluntary liberality of their members; a nation must derive its revenues from the forced contributions of all its subjects.

If in any society membership ceases to be voluntary and

becomes compulsory; if the original objects of the society are so extended and multiplied as to include very many which are essentially different from those for which it was first founded; if the sanctions on which its laws originally rested are changed for sanctions of a fundamentally different character; if its funds, which were first derived from love, are now exacted by force—you have not modified the original institution, you have destroyed it altogether.

Have we any right thus to annihilate the visible churches of Christ? Have we any right to constitute in their place, and to call by their name, a society composed not of voluntary adherents, but of all the members of a commonwealth; a society existing not merely to sustain the worship of God and to save the souls of men, but to protect the lives, the wealth, and the secular greatness of a people; a society relying for its peace and for its safety, not on the reverence of its members for the august authority of the throne of Christ, but on the prison and the gallows, the truncheon of the policeman and the bayonet of the soldier; a society which dares not trust to the love of its members for the revenues it requires, but compels the contributions of the reluctant giver?

By the change in the *terms of membership* you change the relations of individual members to each other and to the whole community; by the change in the *objects* of the society you change its entire constitution; by the change in the *principles and sanctions* of its government you change the whole genius and spirit of its public life; by the change in the *source of its pecuniary strength* you change an act of religious homage into a tax paid to a political power. Change the membership of a society, change its objects, change its government, and, though you may preserve its name, you have lost everything besides.

And while such a theory involves a revolution in the conception of the Church, it provides no security for the right administration of ecclesiastical government. Even granting that a nation becomes a church by the simple process that Hooker describes, it does not follow that the authorities in whom political power is vested are fit to be entrusted with spiritual power also. The organisation of the State has been framed for other ends. Men rise to authority by other than spiritual gifts; they may owe their advancement to their vices rather than their virtues. They may reach the summit of power without any faith

in God, and without any apprehension of the laws which govern the right development of the spiritual life of a community.

The vesting of the government of the Church in the hands of statesmen has resulted in this: the Church, instead of purifying and exalting the habits and laws of nations, has herself been miserably degraded and corrupted; she herself has sunk under the control of those bad passions and bad principles which it was her lofty mission to expel from national communities and from the heart of man. By Hooker's theory you first corrupt the communion of the Church, and you then place the government of the Church in the hands of men who are almost sure to be altogether unfit for the task. You destroy that purity of membership which is essential to the strength and weight of the testimony of the Church to the Divine relations and immortal destiny of the human soul; and you place the control of a society which is intended to purify and regenerate the human race in the hands of men who may have no desire that these great spiritual objects should be accomplished. You destroy the very existence of that distinct spiritual community which was instituted by Christ to be the visible guardian of His truth, the vindicator of His laws, and the human agent for achieving the salvation of the human race.

Mr. Gladstone's theory, as set forth in his treatise on "The State in its Relations with the Church," did not involve any such assumption as Hooker's. He did not regard the nation and the Church as conterminous, but contended that duties which bind men individually bind them also collectively. A government, therefore, should both profess and propagate a religion: it should maintain religious institutions, for the purpose of affording opportunities of religious instruction and worship to every individual within the nation. Macaulay, in a characteristic essay, still memorable for a famous sentence, attacked this position with all the resources of his rhetoric. But he was content to expose the consequences involved in such a doctrine, and he did not seriously concern himself with the abstract principle at issue. Dale in his criticism took the opposite course; with the results of the theory he dealt in a few sentences, and passed at once to examine the theory

itself—that individual profession of faith necessitates a collective profession of faith; that a nation constitutes a personality; and that this personality entails religious responsibilities.

Is it true, he asked, that when men are associated in public acts, they are guilty of atheism unless they publicly and unitedly profess their faith in God and worship Him? It is true that the individual man does not throw off his moral character or lose his moral responsibility when he becomes a statesman: it is true of the devout believer; it is equally true of the unbeliever who is destitute of all religious faith. And if this public and official recognition of God is compulsory upon a statesman, the unbelieving statesman must either withdraw from public life—a demand that is both impracticable and unjust—or he must play the hypocrite by professing to accept the truth that he in his heart rejects. Atheism, rightly understood, in such a case as this, lies, not in withholding the public profession of faith, but in professing a faith that is unreal.

The atheism lies not in omitting to enforce the public profession of a religious creed and the public observance of religious forms on men who have no religious belief and no religious life, but in *enforcing* these things on these men. An earnestly spiritual person co-operating with others who are destitute of faith in his creed and reverence for his God will feel it a desecration of things sacred, instead of a consecration of things secular, to implicate them in the acknowledgment of truth they do not believe, and in the outward participation in acts of worship which they inwardly despise. He will remember that, while in the discharge of his political duties he remains a devout Christian, they in the discharge of the same duties remain unspiritual, and that for them as politicians formally to profess a creed or to engage in worship which as men they utterly reject is hypocrisy and blasphemy in the sight of Him that searcheth the heart; nor will he suppose that his own obligations to acknowledge God in all his acts can require him to compel his colleagues to commit these grievous sins.

He then proceeds to examine Mr. Gladstone's conception of the nation as a personality.

There are some particulars in which a nation, in the unity of its action and responsibilities, resembles a person; there are many other particulars in which it does not. A nation corresponds to a person in the unity of its outward acts, but not in the unity of its inward life. The acts of a nation are like the acts of an individual, but there the analogy ceases. In the same national act different individuals may concur under the control of opposite motives and at the impulse of opposite affections. One statesman may engage in a war to promote the cause of freedom; another may engage in the same war to baffle the schemes of a political opponent; another to vent his hatred against a foreign nation; another because he may suppose that the kindling of military ardour among the people may destroy the mutual animosities and suspicions which may have arisen between different ranks and orders in the State, by inspiring all with the same passions, subjecting all to a common danger, and covering all with a common glory. The external act of a nation has a certain moral unity; but even if *all* the people concur in the *act*, there are, I repeat, infinite diversities in the motives which impel them to it. And it is precisely where the outward act ceases that religious responsibility begins. It is not against a nation as such that we denounce the everlasting penalties of wrong-doing; and a nation as such cannot trust in Christ, and so obtain eternal life. A State, as distinguished from the individuals composing it, cannot repent of sin, cannot be renewed by the Holy Ghost, cannot hold communion with the Father, cannot be mystically united with Christ; but the capacity for all these things is essential to religious life and religious responsibility. If, then, the personality of the State is destitute of precisely those characteristics which entail religious responsibilities on the individual, and render the individual capable of a religious life, Mr. Gladstone's argument, founded on the personality of the State, for the necessity of a national profession of religion, falls to the ground. No religious obligations can be inferred from the *theoretical personality* of the State, if the State do not possess those particular characteristics which bind *real persons* to the discharge of religious duties.

I believe, indeed, in the possibility of a nation becoming Christian, as I believe in the possibility of railway companies becoming Christian. Let all ranks in the State discharge their secular duties under the influence of the spirit and law of Christ; let commerce, let social habits, let those mutual relations of the different classes of the community which civil legislators cannot regulate, all be moulded and penetrated by the principles of the Divine law enthroned in individual consciences, and the spirit

of the Gospel diffused through individual hearts; let statesmen come from the sanctity of private communion with God to the great tasks of legislation and of diplomacy, and without any formal profession of a national faith the national acts will be harmonious with the will of God. Since a nation must act as an individual, those Christian men who conduct its affairs will endeavour to regulate national acts by Christian law; but, since it cannot believe or worship as an individual, they will not require from it the profession of a faith which is the expression of individual conviction, or the observance of forms which are the expression of individual devoutness.

The two other articles which completed the series may be briefly dismissed. The most effective reply to Chalmers's advocacy of union between Church and State, as Dale was not slow to point out, might be found in that magnificent secession from the Scottish Establishment, of which Chalmers himself was the most prominent leader. But as Chalmers had based his argument upon the alleged inadequacy of the voluntary system to meet the needs of the nation, he set himself to examine the case in detail, showing reason to modify, if not to reject, the conclusions at which Chalmers had arrived. The facts and figures with which he was concerned are now out of date, and have lost their value; to reproduce the details of the analysis would be to spend labour in vain. With the "unimaginative and practical archdeacon" he dealt more summarily. Paley's contention, that the jurisdiction of the magistrate, even in religious matters, is limited by no consideration but that of general utility, that the form of Church government which we find in the New Testament possesses only a historic interest, and that convenience should be our only guide, is now almost universally discarded. And both Churchmen and Nonconformists agree that his conception of the Church as "a scheme of instruction," whose sole end is "the preservation and communication of religious knowledge," omits those elements and characteristics to which both the advocates and the opponents of Church establishment in our days attribute supreme importance. To assail a position already abandoned by every man of religious earnestness would have been superfluous, and he

did not war with shadows ; but some of Paley's incidental arguments seemed to him to deserve attention. The plea for an Established Church as guaranteeing "a learned ministry" he meets, not by disparaging the importance of learning, nor by any ungenerous appeal to experience—Paley himself had acknowledged that "we sow many seeds to raise one flower"—but by showing that the demands of theological scholarship might be met in other ways, and also by recalling the fact that some of the noblest contributions to theological literature had been made by men bearing the ordinary burden of pastoral duty. The objection that with a voluntary system preaching would soon be degraded "into a kind of begging"—an objection that does duty still—he treats with a touch of scorn. "It only indicates the religious indifference and heartlessness with which Paley had been surrounded, and which made him incredulous of the animating power of a genuine and deep religious life." "There are still some persons who understand by voluntaryism the right to give nothing, but men are coming to understand that it really means the having to give in the spirit and in the measure that will satisfy God."

The series was completed by an article in which he discussed Bishop Warburton's theory, and also showed to what extent Nonconformists were in agreement with the various writers whose principles had been examined.

For several years after 1862 he was seldom seen on the platform of the Liberation Society ; if he did not avoid its meetings he did not seek them, and he had other duties to occupy him. The education conflict, when he was drawn into it, fully engaged his time and his strength. But the current that carried him away helped in the end to bring him back. The disruption of the Liberal party in 1870, the alienation of the Nonconformists from its official leaders, and Mr. Gladstone's challenge to Mr. Miall to take his support elsewhere if he distrusted those with whom he had been accustomed to act, all combined to bring the disestablishment question to the front. The Nonconformists, so rebuffed, felt that the time had come to

assert themselves, and that they would get nothing except by pressure; and although Mr. Miall and his friends made no demand that a man's Liberalism should stand or fall by the disestablishment test, they showed themselves resolved to assert the right of their principles to practical recognition and to withhold their support from candidates who professed their loyalty to the cause of religious equality but consistently voted for measures involving religious injustice. To strengthen their organisation and to make known their claims, a great conference was held at Birmingham in the autumn of 1872. Dale acted as one of the secretaries, and addressed the public meeting held in the Town Hall at night. He spoke on several other occasions during the next two or three years. But the platform of the Liberation Society was not altogether to his mind. He sometimes found himself in uncongenial company—associated with men who had neither his confidence nor his esteem. And though he felt the truth of the proverb: "It is better to do right with a sinner than wrong with a saint"—he found that their presence made it impossible to discuss a great religious question on religious principles. What he heard at such meetings often jarred and sometimes offended. He did not see his way to withdraw from the work; but he and his friend, Dr. Guinness Rogers, thought that they might do their share of it under different conditions, and they arranged to address a series of meetings subject entirely to their own control and at which they would be the only speakers.

So in the winter of 1875 they visited Bradford, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Norwich, and Derby, and closed their campaign with a meeting and a dinner in London. Twelve months later, a second series of meetings was held at Hull, Bristol, Plymouth, Brighton, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Swansea, Cardiff, and Carnarvon. On the whole they had reason to be satisfied with the success of their experiment. Their audiences were always large and generally enthusiastic, especially where they had been stimulated by opposition. At two or three places there was some disturbance, but of no account to men accustomed

to the turbulence of popular assemblies. The London meeting called forth an article in the *Times*, throwing cold water on the agitation, but warning the defenders of the Church that "a body of able and resolute men" had entered upon a systematic warfare with the Establishment, and suggesting that the Bishops would act wisely if they gave their minds to matters of greater moment than those which they were then discussing in Convocation. Mr. Matthew Arnold also thought it an occasion to pay off an old score left over from an earlier encounter provoked by his *St. Paul and Protestantism*,[1] and in one of his essays he described Dale as "a brilliant pugilist." "He has his arena," said Mr. Arnold, "down at Birmingham, where he does his practice with Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Jesse Collings, and the rest of his band; and then from time to time he comes up to the metropolis, to London, and gives a public exhibition of his skill. And a very powerful exhibition it often is." He went on to express his concern for Dale's "religious temper," and suggested that although his "intellectual muscle" might be braced, his cultivation of grace and peace—which are the essence of religion—could be none the better and "must naturally be something the worse for the time and energy given to his pugilistic interludes."[2] Such banter—if not in the best taste—broke no bones; and Dale had humour enough to relish Mr. Arnold's self-confidence as an exponent of the inner secret of the devout life.

To deal with fourteen speeches—each an hour long—by summary is impracticable. It will be simpler to indicate in the briefest way some of the points with which Dale dealt, in addition to the general theories of the relations of Church and State that have already been noticed.

The social grievance he dismissed with contempt. It is very silly, he said, of Churchmen to plume themselves on their social superiority; it is very silly of Dissenters to care for it. But the social schism which divides men into two

[1] "Mr. Matthew Arnold and the Nonconformists": *The Contemporary Review*, July 1870, pp. 540-571.

[2] *Last Essays on Church and Religion*, pp. 185, 186.

camps in every part of the land—those who are Churchmen and those who are not—he treated as a serious evil. The strength of a nation comes from the unity of the people; anything that tends to split and to sever is hurtful. As matters now stand, there are some who are conscious that they are privileged, others who are conscious that they are wronged; and the two parties are necessarily separated by the policy of the State. For the State takes sides in the conflict of churches. It has ceased indeed to sustain the Established Church by the methods of the past—by the infliction of pains and penalties on those who dissent from it. But though the method has been modified, the policy remains. The State, as the late Bishop Wilberforce insisted, confers an exceptional authority on the Anglican Church as compared with other religious bodies, and treats it as a favoured faith.

> By the providence of God this much is certain, and must be admitted by every one, that the Church of England, as treated at present by the State and the nation, is the religious teacher of the people. Mark you that this is so. There has been given, and I think very properly given, perfect liberty to all other religious bodies—and I for one would not see that liberty infringed upon by prerogative or other legislation in the least degree. But that is not in the least degree giving up the claim that the Church of England is the teacher of the people. It is saying: We provide what we believe to be the properly constituted system of teaching, but if others think differently, we do not enforce upon their consciences that which they condemn, but leave them to provide another for themselves if their conscience dictate to them to do so.[1]

The quotation is a long one, but it represents with exceptional accuracy the policy against which Dale contended. The Church of England claims to be *the teacher of the English people.* The constitution treats it as such. Its bishops sit by right in the legislature; its clergy represent the State in the ceremony of marriage. Their other privileges, arising by prescription out of this position of authority, though curtailed of late, are still considerable.

[1] *Life of S. Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 151.

Although the people are openly divided in religious opinion, the State, the country through, takes sides with one community against the rest, and clothes its ministers with the moral authority derived from the special sanction of law. It meets the Unitarian with its doctrine of the Trinity; the Baptist with its theory of baptismal regeneration; the Presbyterian with its system of Episcopacy. Against each and all it asserts its claim to be the only authoritative teacher recognised by the State in matters of religious belief. The authority of the State is so exerted as to obstruct and discourage the free growth of religious conviction.

The present system, from another point of view, is anomalous and unjust. Parliament, representing the nation as a whole, is the legislative authority of the English Church. Without the sanction of Parliament no change can be made in doctrine, ritual, or administration. To adopt a new lectionary, to carve out a new diocese, to revise the laws that regulate the tenure of livings and the discipline of the clergy, the Church must go to Parliament. When Hooker's theory—that there is not "any member of the commonwealth which is not also a member of the Church of England"—fairly tallied with the fact, the Parliament of the nation might be justified in legislating for the Church of the nation. But it cannot be right that Parliament representing the whole of the nation should legislate for a Church that now represents only a portion of it. Still more irrational is it that a Parliament containing men of every variety of creed—Jews, Independents, Baptists, Wesleyans—and some who have broken away from religious faith altogether, should legislate for a Church whose office it is to contend against the opinions which they hold.

Further, the interests both of the nation and of the Church require that Parliament should be relieved of the responsibility of administering the ecclesiastical business of the Church. The burden resting upon the legislature is already so heavy and so complex that it cannot find time to do its own work as it should. To compel it to

undertake other duties for which it is manifestly unfit is absurd; and at the same time Parliament is incapacitated for the discharge of its proper functions.

A more serious objection remains. To embody definitions of religious doctrine and forms of religious worship in Acts of Parliament, is to stereotype religious thought and to stereotype the expressions of the religious life in a disastrous manner. At Liverpool he referred to this point in some detail.

There are indeed certain great theological ideas and conceptions which have been handed down by the Christian Church from age to age practically and substantially unchanged. To use an illustration which I remember Rémusat applies to great philosophical ideas, these enduring truths of the Christian faith are like precious family jewels—jewels which descend as heirlooms from one generation to another. In one age they may be set in a coronet, and in another age in a necklace, and in another they may glitter in the hilt of a sword. The setting varies from time to time, but the jewels remain untouched. So it is with certain great theological conceptions. But to perpetuate the human framework by which these theological ideas are surrounded is a different thing altogether from preserving the jewels which the framework is intended to enshrine.

Let us see how the perpetuating of certain theological definitions by Act of Parliament has affected the theological life and thought of the English Church. You all remember what an outburst of indignation there was forty years ago, when John Henry Newman wrote Tract Ninety in order to prove that the articles of the Church of England did not condemn certain doctrines which nearly every one before had supposed that they did condemn. I am not going to say whether I think that Dr. Newman's ingenuity was legitimate or not, but it seems to me that if the articles really do not express the faith which nine Englishmen out of ten have supposed they express, it is time so to change the articles as to make them express that faith. You remember, too, how, again and again, the Evangelical party in the Church of England has been charged with disloyalty, because it has not accepted the High Church theory concerning baptismal regeneration. If the Church were free to discuss these questions in a convocation in which its clergy and laity were fairly represented, and if Parliament had nothing to do either with its articles or its offices, theologians, instead of having to resort to a thousand ingenious devices which are alien

to the habits of Englishmen in order to show that their opinions are in harmony with the authentic documents of the Church, would simply endeavour to convince the mind of the Church of the truth of their opinions, and the Church would be able to define afresh in what sense it held the articles and what meaning it attached to the offices. You all know perfectly well that there is not the slightest chance of Parliament discussing the question of baptismal regeneration in order to readjust, if necessary, the baptismal office. There is not the slightest possibility of Parliament investigating Ritualist doctrines in order to readjust, if necessary, the Thirty-nine Articles. The articles and offices are bound upon the Church by the Act of Uniformity, and there can be no possible revision of either until the affairs of the Church are administered by Parliament no longer, but by a free assembly representing the faith and the piety of the English Church. No matter what changes may pass upon the faith and the religious life of the adherents of the English Church they can make no change in the articles or in the prayers in which that faith and life ought to receive a perfect expression, and the reason of this is that the articles and prayers are in the schedule of an Act of Parliament.

The system leaves no liberty to the working of the Spirit; it perpetuates that which should be temporary, and fetters that which should be left free. The same evil —obstruction of the natural course of development and the play of activity—makes itself felt in other ways also, less hurtful, perhaps, to the religious life of the Church, but not less real.

In these addresses Dale does not avoid the thorny question of church property. He discusses with some fulness the origin and the growth of the wealth of the English Church, examines the "pious ancestor" theory of church endowment, and asserts the right of the nation to dispose of the buildings erected for the use of the nation.[1]

One principle he enforced with great earnestness. Separation from the national church can be justified only by the gravest, deepest, and most solemn objections against its order and doctrine. Every place of worship built by those who have separated themselves from the

[1] *e.g.* "Parish Churches. To whom do they belong?"—*Congregationalist*, January 1876, pp. 38-43.

Church of England is an embodied protest. Those whom conviction has compelled to withdraw from the Church established and maintained by the State, if their faith is genuine, are bound to use their political influence to deprive that Church of the authority which it derives from the national sanction. For those who perpetuate a law are equally responsible for its existence with those who enacted it; and those who suffer an Established Church to hold its place are responsible for the influence that it exerts by reason of its official position. Those who dissent from the Established Church but acquiesce in its existence, sanction, as citizens, the very teaching which, as individuals, they solemnly reject.

The campaign was a serious enterprise, and Dale shrank from it. He knew that it would provoke resentment and hostility; that he would be misunderstood by men whose regard he valued. He never forgot an incident that occurred at Bristol about the time of the education conflict. He had been speaking or preaching in the Colston Hall for the Bible Society, and as he passed out through the crowd he heard a man say to a friend—"Was that Dale of Birmingham? Why, I always understood that he was an atheist." Slander of that kind cut him to the quick; and the disestablishment question could not fail to stir the most bitter prejudice. There were difficulties on his own side too. While he was at one with the leaders of the Liberation Society upon the principles at issue, he had his own opinion as to the way in which the principles should be applied in legislation. As will appear in the letters that follow, the differences between him and them were at one time so grave as to place him in a position of extreme delicacy.

The vigour and firmness which he maintained throughout this controversy exposed him to special hostility. A favourite mode of attack was to contrast him with his predecessor at Carr's Lane, and to lament over his degeneracy from the "saintly" John Angell James. Sometimes it annoyed him; and he would quote from Mr. James's writings to show that he had never spoken as

strongly as Mr. James about the evils of an Established Church; sometimes it amused him; and he had no difficulty in proving that those who canonised Mr. James when dead had not always been as reverential to him when living. One description of Mr. James by a Tory reviewer he greatly appreciated. "Wealthy, fat, and saucy, he lords it over his heritage in Carr's Lane, and preaches to some four thousand persons against the laws and government of his country, which, according to him, are the sole cause of emigration." This passage he quoted with genuine enjoyment, adding that no doubt his own successor would be abused as he had been, and that the time would come when Conservatives and Churchmen would remind him that Mr. Dale was a religious, not a political Dissenter, and exhort him to copy his predecessor's Christian charity, the gentleness of his spirit, and the moderation of his language.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

1st January 1876.

. . . We have put our hands to a great work together, and I trust that we shall both be able to carry it through as a part of the service to which Christ has called us—with the one object present to us always of getting His will done on earth as it is done in Heaven. And in *this* work it is a cause of special thankfulness that we are in every sense sure of each other.

To Sir E. R. Russell

October 1875.

. . . Thanks for the article of yesterday.[1] It hit the weak side of my speech very properly; but it lies in my line to appeal to the strong religious sentiment and conviction that exist in the Establishment. And I have not much faith in popular movements which are not sustained by religious intensity.

To Mr. J. F. Alexander

25th November 1875.

. . . While I was speaking a curious and, to me, inexplicable affection came upon me, from which I only gradually escaped.

[1] In the *Liverpool Daily Post.*

It was just as if I was speaking in my sleep, and going on without any kind of voluntary effort. For a few moments, too, I had the feeling that the hall was gradually being filled with the morning light, and when I looked up and saw the gas, I felt as though it were burning in the light of the dawn. Queer, wasn't it? I expected to find clearer signs of the odd experience in the speech.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

5th July 1876.

I am in despair about the Liberation scheme.[1] The two main questions—compensation and appropriation—were determined last week by a large majority in a way which seems to me ruinous. I have written a private note to Williams,[2] begging him not to hurry the publication. If the publication came at once I should feel obliged to repudiate the scheme at Carnarvon and Swansea—which would be disloyal to the Society; or else I should have to throw up both engagements. If the publication is delayed till after the Welsh conferences I shall have time to think whether I can take any future engagements for the Society or whether I shall have to work independently.

The proposal relating to compensation, as it stands, means that except in the case of very old men the income should be cut down on the ground of dismissal from service. In cases where men could find other employment, this would be just enough: but cases of the other sort would be innumerable; and in them the proposal would, if carried out, be robbery. Of course I see very well what was not mentioned last week, that Churchmen might complain at the nation's releasing the whole of their clergy from the pecuniary necessity of continuing their clerical work. On the other hand, so far as the mass of the clergy are concerned, their incomes, if they received them in full, are so small as to leave them under sufficiently strong motives for taking duty.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

13th July 1876.

It was very good of you to write. The issue of the discussion last week was to some extent reassuring, but the whole character

[1] An outline scheme for a measure of disestablishment and disendowment drafted by a sub-committee of the Liberation Society.

[2] Mr. Carvell Williams, then Secretary of the Liberation Society.

of the previous meeting was to me very discouraging. There seemed a total failure to grasp the real conditions of the problem. No doubt the two points on which I differed from the majority of the Committee are unlike — essentially unlike. But one suggestion seemed the grossest possible violation of justice, the other the grossest possible violation of expediency; and these two points are capital points of the scheme. I do not see how I could have pretended to regard the two matters as unimportant, or how I could have yielded my judgment to that of the majority. However, on one of them the scheme was modified at the last sitting, and the publication of the whole scheme is delayed. So far, so good.

The campaign closed under conditions very different from those of its beginning. In 1877 foreign affairs engrossed men's minds and the disestablishment question receded to an obscure position. The effect produced by Dale and his colleague in the towns that they visited was effaced by the rising tide of indignation and alarm provoked by Lord Beaconsfield's policy; feeling was strong enough to submerge all differences of opinion among the various sections of the Liberal party. At the time of the election of 1880 the Liberal catechism, it has been said, was confined to one question—Will you renounce Lord Beaconsfield and all his works? A year before the election, Dale refused to undertake a fresh campaign; he had other work in hand, and he believed the time to be unfavourable for such an appeal. When the issue between the Ministry and the people was fought out at the polls, he refused to raise the question in any shape or form; at such a crisis the interests of Nonconformity, he felt, must give place to the necessity of the nation.

The letters that immediately follow deal with other aspects of the question. Some of them may seem to bear more directly on the principle and system of Congregationalism; but they were written with special reference to the conflict between the Established and the Nonconformist churches, and they may fitly stand in this connection.

In the first letter Dale refers to a conference of London clergy to which he had been taken by his friend Dr. Wace.

The subject for discussion, introduced by Professor E. H. Plumptre, the late Dean of Wells, was—"Are Dissenting ministers to be regarded by the clergy as schismatics, or as fellow-labourers in the gospel?" Dr. Wace, writing to Dale after the debate, criticised the position of the Nonconformist Churches as a violation of the unity which was recognised as essential by the primitive Church. Unity, whether in a church or in a nation, can, in practice, be secured only by allegiance to persons who govern or represent it. The system of Episcopacy secured that unity, and should on that ground, if on no other, be accepted. It is to this argument that Dale replies. The letter to Mr. Bunting, the editor of the *Contemporary*, was written at a time when the movement for Free Church Federation had not reached even its infancy. But the idea was in the air; and Mr. Bunting had suggested that the Free Churches should federate with each other and with the Scotch Churches, each church preserving its autonomy, but "with enough collective action to present a spectacle of Christian unity and of a religious body that could claim the allegiance of Christian men not definitely pledged to exclusive Episcopacy."

To the Rev. Dr. Wace

25th May 1875.

The discussion to which you were good enough to take me was really very interesting and instructive, and to me very entertaining; although what entertained me most had also a certain element of sadness in it which I have felt more deeply since than I felt it at the time. The unsatisfactory side of it was the inevitable result of the great variety of causes which have led to the separation between Nonconformists and Churchmen. The Erastian cause would have been enough for one evening, and more than enough. So would the *jure divino* authority and necessity of the Episcopal polity. Your own position would also have given the opportunity for a far more fruitful discussion. The opener ought to have been a man on the other side, with a definite theory. I think I understand your position; and as I suppose that you do not hold the high doctrine of Episcopacy

and the succession, I think that I should have no difficulty in accepting your fundamental proposition that it was "an essential principle of the early Church that all parts of the Christian community should hold together, and that Episcopacy was—I should say, gradually *came to be*—the embodiment of the principle in a manner similar to that in which loyalty to the Queen is now the practical first principle of English national life." This principle, that all parts of the Church or Christian community should hold together, is the essential thing with you. That Episcopacy happened to be—from whatsoever cause—the form under which unity came to be asserted is a secondary matter. Had the Church assumed a Presbyterian organisation like that of the Scotch Church, your case against separation would have been equally strong. But Episcopacy was the actual polity in which the unity of the Church was asserted. Your appeal, if I rightly understand you, is to history. It has so happened here in England that the throne is the symbol and guarantee of our national unity. It so happened that Episcopacy became the symbol and guarantee of the unity of the Catholic Church. The authority of Episcopacy rests, therefore, on historic grounds. It is in possession, however it came there. But if this is your case, it must submit to historic criticism. Has it fulfilled the conditions which any system of church polity ought to satisfy? Has it historically vindicated its position? We can imagine conditions under which loyalty to the throne would be destructive of the very ends of national life, and we might be required to suppress the throne in order to preserve the nation. I think that in Western Christendom analogous conditions had arisen in relation to the authority of the Roman See long before the sixteenth century. The very ends for which the Church exists were imperilled by the formal union of the West under the See of Rome. Even granting—which I should be disposed, and more than *disposed* to deny—that there was ever any sufficient religious reason, as distinguished from reasons relating to the civilisation and culture of Europe, for the kind of unity which was broken up by the Reformation, I should contend that those reasons had long disappeared. At what point in the development of the Episcopal polity any number of individual Christians would have been justified in breaking away from it and returning to the simpler order of earlier times, I do not think it is easy to say. The right of possession goes a very long way with me. But there was superabundant justification of the English "schism" in the sixteenth century, and, as I think, of the Nonconformist "schism" in the seventeenth. We were all forced out of Rome together; and we Nonconformists were forced out of the English Church

in 1662. [The justification of the earlier Nonconformists rests on less obvious grounds, although they are grounds which, to me, are not less real.]

Having thus been obliged to secede, the whole question of ecclesiastical authority becomes, in a sense, an open question to us. We are free to criticise it. The conclusions at which we arrive are such as these:—

1. The Church "held together" when there were no organic relations between distant Christian communities—between Rome and Corinth, for instance, when Clement wrote to the Corinthians; between Smyrna and Philippi, when Polycarp wrote to the Philippians.

2. The development of diocesan as distinguished from congregational Episcopacy (*a*) tends to suppress the free life of the separate congregations, to diminish their sense of responsibility, to lessen the motives to vigorous exertion, and (*b*) tends also to create occasions of strife.

Had I lived in Smyrna, in Polycarp's time, I should not have felt free to establish an "Independent" church in a suburb of the city. To have done it would have been schism in the actual condition of Christian thought and life. To have established an "Independent" church three or four miles out of Smyrna would also, I suppose, have been schism. It seems to me and other Congregationalists that this extension of the authority of the central church over a considerable geographical area, and the subsequent development of archbishoprics and patriarchates, has historically failed to secure real unity, and that what was intended to hold the Christian community together has been the fruitful cause of bitter divisions. We therefore try another way.

Take my own case. In the year 1859, when I succeeded to the sole pastorate of my present church, I was in a position which enabled me to understand the development of diocesan Episcopacy. Two mission stations established by the church of which I was pastor had grown to considerable strength. I forget the precise number of communicants at each, but I think there were about 120 at one and about 150 at the other. *All* were admitted into the fellowship of the central church; all, as a matter of course, had the franchise in the central church; all cases of discipline were submitted to the central church. Each station had its missionary or minister, who baptized and presided at the Lord's Supper, he having been appointed to these functions by the vote of the central church, which raised him from the position of a missionary to that of a missionary pastor. I thought I saw that each of these stations had become vigorous enough to look after its own affairs, and that if it were left to do so it

would become more vigorous still. I was young and I had some fear that if any trouble arose in the church the votes of each of these mission stations would be given *en bloc* under the influence naturally belonging to its local leaders—the members being more vitally associated with each special mission than with the church as a whole.

I therefore proposed that they should become "independent." They accepted the proposal very cordially. We have continued till within the last four or five years to aid them both with money; one of them we aid still, the other no longer needs our help. Morally and religiously we "hold together" just as much as before; and I am tolerably clear that but for the formal separation there would have been chafing and irritation again and again, by which the existing unity of spirit would have been disturbed.

The kind of unity we maintain, and which exists between all the Congregational churches in this town, is very real. If one church excommunicates a member, no other church will receive him into fellowship without conference with the church from which he was expelled. It would be a grave offence to admit a man into one church after he had been expelled from another, until he had shown adequate penitence for his offence.

In foreign missions, country work, and many other forms of Christian usefulness, we work together. No church in the town would, I think, invite a minister when the pastorate was vacant if there was reason to believe that he was regarded with distrust by the other churches. The *mutual* moral influence of the churches over each other is very considerable wherever there is healthy life. Their organic independence of each other renders it possible at once to assert liberty of action when there is any disposition to use this influence for selfish purposes.

Your conception of the Congregational principle is both true and false. No doubt it happens too often that half a dozen people fall out with their minister and go off to establish a separate church. There is nothing to hinder them, *except* the moral influence of neighbouring churches. If there is wealth and zeal they can build their chapel and invite their minister; but it does not follow that they get *recognised* as a Congregational church. They may remain for a long time as isolated as a Ritualistic priest in a town which is in possession of the Evangelicals. Such a church applies for admission into the County Association. Its right to establish itself is challenged as a matter of course by the original church, and the challenge is not unfrequently sustained. The church is then left out in the cold. We have a rule, for instance, in our college here that no

such church shall be "supplied" by students from the college until the county recognises it. It has broken unity, and there is no "communion" with it. I have been a minister in Birmingham twenty-two years. No case has arisen during the whole time of the illegitimate establishment of a Congregational church. Church after church has been established; in every case the movement has been promoted by the existing churches.

This is our *idea*. Often, I suppose—though I don't know many cases—the idea is violated; and when it is violated, I think it generally happens that after a long quarantine the revolting church is received into the informal fellowship of its sister churches and its original sin is forgotten. The second Congregational church in Birmingham—as the Americans would call it—was created by a "schism" from my own church about seventy years ago; no relations could be more cordial than those which have existed between us ever since I have been a minister here.

In short, I believe that history shows that churches will "hold together" better on the Congregational system than on any other; and since by exclusion from the Church which is still the largest church in the country I am free to consider what church polity is most in harmony with the genius of Christianity, and most conducive to the ends for which Christianity exists, I am a Congregationalist; and my reply to you would be, Your system never had anything but a historical justification, and historically it has broken down; it has proved unequal to its professed end; the great mass of those who serve Christ *cannot* be included in one organised system, *therefore* you have no right to refuse fraternal recognition to those who are not included in it.

What a letter I have inflicted on you! I am afraid that there is not much method in it; but perhaps it may suggest, if it does not express, the line which I think might be taken. Pray forgive my prosiness.

To Mr. E. Stiff

14th March 1887.

I noticed a week or two ago that Mr. Foxley had suggested some scheme for reunion, but the claims upon my time from the Education Commission and the project for establishing a Congregational college at Oxford are so heavy that I read nothing I am not obliged to read for practical purposes or to keep one's life a little fresh and calm; and as I have no confidence in the possibility of any scheme for drawing us all into the Establishment, I passed over Mr. Foxley's proposals.

The anxiety created by the drifting of some—perhaps many—of our wealthier young people into the Establishment is, as you are aware, not new. It was probably more keen and intense about 1730 than it has ever been since. The fact, to whatever extent it exists, should be considered with earnestness, and its causes investigated. We know very little of it here, though of course cases sometimes occur.

For myself, the Congregational ideal of the Church—an ideal shared by both branches of Congregationalists—is so august and lofty, that I cannot surrender it. I have been very familiar with the best High Church literature for thirty years, and have had personal friends among the High Church clergy. From some of the leaders of that section of the Church I have received many expressions of friendliness. There have been times when I have felt the charm of their position. But God has revealed "some better thing" to us, and to that we must be faithful. No doubt the vision of the ideal Church which came to our fathers has almost faded, but it has not been altogether lost. It has returned to some in these days of agitation and trouble. And what has particularly struck one lately is, that among the men who have been most powerfully attracted by it, are young men who have received the highest culture, who are exceptionally devout, and who at the universities have had the best means of knowing what the English Church really is.

And so I am of good heart. Possibly we may have many losses —I cannot tell. The wonder to me is, considering that the Congregational ideal has been almost forgotten for several generations, and its place taken by a system of individualism, that our churches have survived. Their survival is an illustration of the power of Evangelical truth; as apart from a great polity no Church survives long.

TO "THE GUARDIAN"

January 1886.

Canon Fremantle[1] can know nothing of the main body of Nonconformist opinion, if he imagines that his proposals would

[1] Canon Fremantle published a scheme for the nationalisation of the Church and the recognition of Nonconformists. He proposed to afford them opportunities of holding services of a freer kind than those of the Prayer-Book, in the Church fabric, and within the Church system. He declared himself opposed to any test for membership of the Parochial Councils and Church Boards included in his scheme. The Editor of the *Guardian* sent the scheme to Dale, asking him, as a representative Nonconformist, to pass an opinion on it. He replied as above.

secure much Nonconformist support. They would be resisted with all the religious enthusiasm and energy of the party in the Establishment that cares for the idea of the Church; and to be successful would require the support of equal religious earnestness on the other side. But they are absolutely destitute of any element that could create religious enthusiasm among Nonconformists. They are a scheme for destroying the Church to preserve the Establishment.

One of Canon Fremantle's proposals might obtain political support if he were willing to make it alone—the proposed vesting of all church property in a council elected by all the ratepayers; this would be a long step taken towards disendowment. If the Bishop of Worcester's scheme for a national representative Council of Churchmen were also adopted, this would be an equally effective movement towards disestablishment. The two together would make the future work of the Liberation Society extremely simple.

On the other hand, the attempt to confer statutory powers on parochial or national councils, consisting only of persons described as *bona fide* Churchmen, would meet with firm resistance. I do not think that many Nonconformists would consent to a scheme that lessened their control over any national institution. It would be a measure of disfranchisement. As long as the English Church is politically and legally the Church of the nation, the whole nation must share in the government of it.

To Mr. P. W. Bunting

Llanbedr, 14*th August* 1889.

. . . On what I suppose to be your main point I think that I agree with you. A Church should be an institution that is formed for man, like the State and the Family, not an organisation that he creates for himself. In this sense it should have a *public* character. The Church of England has this public character in a sense in which our churches have not. I remember an observation of a Radical member of Parliament which struck me at the time, and which I have often turned over in my mind since: he said, "I do not approve of the establishment of religion, but I go to Church; and the reason is that if I went to a Nonconformist church my attendance would imply acceptance of its creed, but my attendance at Church implies nothing." Put in another way, I suppose that this is equivalent to saying that a man's English citizenship does not imply approval of the monarchy. The monarchy is a public institution, with authority;

a man may submit to the authority without any intellectual approval of the special form in which it is organised. But if a man joins the National Liberal Federation he professes faith in Liberalism. His adhesion adds to the authority—if it can be called authority—of the organisation. In the case of the State his submission has no such effect. In the one case he makes no choice; in the other he does. To me there is in the Church, according to its true idea, an authority analogous to that which belongs to the State. So far, I suppose that my thought runs in the current of yours. Schism, therefore, or the dividing of the organic unity of the Church—the setting up of an organisation which a company of Christian men suppose to be in nearer conformity to the mind of Christ than the existing community—is one of the gravest and most perilous of acts. And yet there have been times when this was necessary, and when the seceders had a right to believe that the presence of Christ with two or three gathered together in His name justified their separation. Wace pressed me some years ago with the argument for Episcopacy derived from the historic development of the Church.[1] He did not claim—if I understood him—a formal Divine institution for Episcopacy, but said that it must be the will of God that the Church should hold together, and that as a matter of fact it had come to hold together under Episcopacy, as England held together under the monarchy. He anticipated the obvious reply that England had broken away from Western Christendom in the sixteenth century, and parried it by saying, If you are compelled in conscience to separate from us as we were compelled to separate from Rome, of course the precedent justifies you; but are the evils so grave that separation is imperative?

But while I feel the force of your plea for a *public* Church I do not see how we are to get it. Suppose that all Evangelical Nonconformists were not merely to federate but to combine in one great ecclesiastical organisation, they would not become a public Church in the sense in which the Anglican Church can now be so described. If the Catholic worship had not been suppressed at the Reformation, Anglicanism would have had to fight through generations for its public position—even the adhesion of the Sovereign and Parliament would not have impressed upon it a public character as against the older institution supported still by a large part of Europe. It would have taken several generations, even with King and Parliament on its side, to have made good its position. In our case the new Church would remain for a very much longer period a creation of merely private persons, not the historic, authoritative Church.

[1] See above, pp. 388 foll.

This argument rests on the assumption that combination is possible; but even Federation seems to me to be out of reach. I was at Barmouth yesterday. We Congregationalists have a wooden church, holding perhaps 150 people; the Baptists, three years ago, opened a church—stone, however—holding about as many; your people[1] have also a church. The Baptists and Wesleyans conduct English service only in the season; it is the same with the Presbyterians. In the winter, I believe, they are all with us. It is of no use saying that such a policy as this is hateful—I could swear when I think of it. It exists. It is far too strong to be suppressed. Even the different Methodist communities—with a common creed, common institutions, a common ἦθος, a common history, and with the causes of the original divisions gradually disappearing—can neither combine nor confederate; how can we dream of a more general confederation?

For myself, as you know, I believe that Congregationalism—not in its actual form, but in its principle—is the highest Christian ideal. Had the discovery come to me in Elizabeth's time, I doubt whether I should have had the courage to attempt to realise it. My conception of church authority would probably have restrained me. And yet—I might; for in those days the Anglican Establishment had revolted too recently to have the kind of public position which it has acquired since, and there was the tradition of a long line of secret assemblies—virtually Congregational churches—extending from Wiclif's time downwards, and there were traces, perhaps, of still earlier assemblies of the same kind. But *now*, the argument has another shape. Historically, the Separatist Churches have contributed, in evil times, to maintain a nobler faith and a deeper life. Christendom has *not* held together. The West separated from the East; England separated from the West; at the very time of the separation the Christian life of England struggled for expression and organisation in other forms than that which claims our submission. The "world" has obstructed and suppressed the Divine life of the Church, and the "unity" has been necessarily broken. And now we can but hope for its restoration. Meanwhile we contribute most to realising our hope by loyally serving what seems to us to be the true ideal of the Church—recognising at the same time our spiritual unity with those from whom we are most widely separated, Catholics and Anglicans among them.

There is clearly no word of guidance in me for the movement

[1] The Wesleyan Methodists.

which has seemed to you possible. And if fusion, or even confederation, is ever to come, it must come, I think, under a baptism of fire—either from God or the passions of bad men; a baptism of the Holy Spirit or of persecution—the latter assisting us to receive the former.

CHAPTER XVI

A MUNICIPAL GOSPEL

Politics and religion—God's will to be done on earth—Alderman White and his work in the Town Council—A municipal gospel—New standards for public men—The Mayor and the "Woodman"—Mr. Chamberlain and municipal statesmanship — Dale supports the new school — His speeches in the wards—The character of public men—The Sunday evening lectures; an unjust monopoly—Dale's protest and its result—Mr. Bunce's estimate of his position and influence in the public life of Birmingham.

WHEN Dale first began to take an active part in politics, not merely asserting principles but sharing in the conflict through which principles are applied in action, his thought was dominated and his action prescribed by the idea of the Living Christ. For him the Living Christ was a reigning Christ, the Prince as well as the Saviour of men, whose will is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. On His head are "many crowns"; His authority extends to every province of human energy.[1] To make that authority effective and supreme is the duty of the true Christian, who must live in the world and not apart from it, in the world but not of it, a force to leaven and to purify. If at any point in the domain either of thought or of action, Christ's authority is not asserted—whether in art, literature, commerce, or politics—the failure to assert it is criminal, and must be retrieved. And a Christian minister—so it then appeared to him—may be bound to enforce the duty not by precept only but by

[1] See *The Laws of Christ for Common Life*, pp. 255 foll. and especially pp. 266-269.

example. His conception of the religious life was essentially Protestant; it recognised no priesthood save the universal priesthood of all Christians; it ignored the conventional distinction between things sacred and things secular; all work, it held, is sacred in which a man can do the will of God, and God's thought and purpose are as wide as life itself. In politics, therefore, whether national or municipal, Dale felt himself to be an "ambassador for Christ."

Many of his friends found it difficult to understand his position. Canon O'Sullivan, for instance, the Roman Catholic Vicar-General of the diocese, would often banter him in private about his political ardour. Sometimes he would take a graver tone. One afternoon when, as their way was, they had gone to the Central Nonconformist Committee Room, after a School Board meeting, for a talk and a smoke, O'Sullivan suddenly broke short the conversation and said in his sharp, abrupt tone: "Dale, when do you mean to quit politics and look after your soul?" The precise words of the reply cannot be recalled, but this was their substance: "I have given my soul to Christ to look after," he said; "He can do it better than *I* can: my duty is to do His will, and to leave the rest with Him."

Frequently criticism and counsel took another form. Good and sometimes kindly people who wished him well and were distressed by his public action would send him letters of remonstrance—often unsigned—or little books of a devotional and contemplative type. In one of these the sender had written: "There are no politics in heaven; there is where your heart should be; sad, sad, that it is otherwise!" The intention might be kind, but the argument was absurd. The same protest, and in the same words—as Dale pointed out in referring to the incident—might have been addressed to the physician of a hospital, or to the chairman of a railway company; it might have been addressed even to those who try to convert the world by tea-meetings and tracts. There are no politics in heaven: true enough—in the partisan sense. But in

heaven there is no poverty, no crime, which unjust or unwise laws have helped to create; there are no social wrongs to redress. Heaven as the kingdom of God is the ideal and final polity. But on earth it is otherwise, and the Christian man is bound so to bear his part here that good shall prevail over evil; he may serve Christ in the polling-booth or on the platform, in Parliament, in the Town Council, or on the Board of Guardians. That was a truth which Dale never wearied of asserting. He would never admit that religious devotion can excuse any neglect of private or public duty.

God's commandments are much broader than some good people imagine, and to fulfil them properly they must surrender their whole heart and will to Him. . . . His commandments cover your municipal life, and no devoutness can be an excuse for not paying your rates, neither can it be an excuse for keeping away from the polling-booth at the time of an election. If you neglect looking after property over which you are trustees, and as a result of that neglect others are deprived of a portion of that property, you commit a grave sin; and you also commit a grave sin if you neglect using your municipal vote, and as a result of that neglect the town is badly governed.

According to the Divine order, civil authority is necessary to the existence of civil society. Civil rulers are "ministers of God"; but they are not designated to their office by a voice from heaven. . . . (They) have to be selected, directly or indirectly, by those who possess the franchise. It is surely a part of God's service to determine who shall be God's "ministers," and for the manner in which we discharge this service we are responsible to God. Not to vote is to act the part of the unfaithful servant who hid his talent in the earth and made no use of it. To vote corruptly is felony; it is to appropriate to our own purposes what we have received as trustees for the town or the nation.[1]

He often illustrated the principle by reference to the case of Alderman White, well known throughout the country as a prominent member of the Society of Friends.

[1] *The Laws of Christ for Common Life*, p. 201.

Two years ago a friend of mine in Birmingham, who for very many years has had a large Bible Class of young men on Sunday mornings—I am afraid to say how large the class is, but if I say two hundred men attended every Sunday, I think I should fall short of the number,—this gentleman stood for the Town Council when a vacancy occurred in one of the worst wards in the borough. There were two or three thousand voters in that ward; they were a very rough set; we fought hard, and we carried him. Ten days ago he rose in the Council. He was able to say that he had visited every street, every court in his ward. He told an appalling story of the condition of the people in that ward and in some adjacent wards. He spoke of the squalid homes in which they were living, destructive to health, and rendering all high moral Christian life almost impossible. He submitted to the Council an elaborate scheme for sweeping all the wretched district away at a cost of four and a half millions. The Council accepted the proposal unanimously. Now I believe that my friend was trying to get the will of God done on earth as it is done in heaven just as much when he was fighting St. Mary's ward, just as much when he was speaking in the Town Council, as when he was teaching his Bible Class on the Sunday morning.

In the sketch contributed to the Life of his friend and fellow-worker, Dr. Crosskey, Dale described the growth and progress of the new idea of municipal duty by which Birmingham has for long been distinguished. The change was not brought about in a day, nor without resolute effort and patient self-sacrifice.

Towards the end of the sixties a few Birmingham men made the discovery, that perhaps a strong and able Town Council might do almost as much to improve the conditions of life in the town as Parliament itself. I have called it a "discovery"; for it had all the freshness and charm—it created all the enthusiasm —of a "discovery." One of its first effects was to invest the Council with new attractiveness and dignity. Able men and men of considerable social position had already discharged municipal duties, but very many of their colleagues were of a very inferior order. It now became the ambition of young men, and cultivated men, and men of high social position, to represent a ward and to become aldermen and mayors. The weaker and less effective members of the Corporation were gradually dropped, and their places filled by men of quite a new type.

The November ward meetings assumed a new character. The speakers, instead of discussing small questions of administration and of economy, dwelt with glowing enthusiasm on what a great and prosperous town like Birmingham might do for its people. They spoke of sweeping away streets in which it was not possible to live a healthy and decent life; of making the town cleaner, sweeter, and brighter; of providing gardens and parks and music; of erecting baths and free libraries, an art gallery and a museum. They insisted that great monopolies like the gas and water-supply should be in the hands of the Corporation; that good water should be supplied without stint at the lowest possible prices; that the profits of the gas-supply should relieve the pressure of the rates. Sometimes an adventurous orator would excite his audience by dwelling on the glories of Florence and of the other cities of Italy in the Middle Ages, and suggest that Birmingham, too, might become the home of a noble literature and art.

The original creation of this new spirit was, I believe, due to the late Mr. George Dawson, more than to any other man. For many years he had been teaching that unless the best and ablest men in a community were willing to serve it, new laws could not work any great reformation; and that it was the duty of those who derived their prosperity and opportunities of culture from the community to become its servants.

Mr. Dawson was the "prophet" of the new movement. But Mr. Dawson had not the kind of faculty necessary for putting his generous faith into practice. This was largely done by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who began to show proof of those great powers which have since been recognised by the nation. Mr. Chamberlain gave himself to the municipal work with a contagious enthusiasm. He did not merely enter the Council, give a large amount of time and strength to its committees, make striking and eloquent speeches on the new municipal policy; he used his social influence to add strength to the movement. He appealed in private to men of ability who cared nothing for public life, and he showed how much they might do for the town if they would go into the Council; he insisted that what they were able to do, it was their duty to do. He dreamt dreams and saw visions of what Birmingham might become, and resolved that he, for his part, would do his utmost to fulfil them. The new movement was fortunate in securing, from the first, the able support and wise guidance of the *Birmingham Daily Post*. Its editor, Mr. Bunce, was the trusted friend and adviser of the leaders, and the intimate personal friend of the most important of them. Through the columns of the most powerful newspaper in the Midland

Counties the new ideas about municipal life and duty were pressed on the whole community.[1]

By slow degrees the change was wrought. The new spirit made itself felt in many ways. For instance, ward meetings were no longer held in public-houses. The councillors themselves found a new standard of dignity prescribed for them.

It is all so remote now that perhaps without any risk of offence one other illustration of the change in the public feeling may be recalled. It was the custom in those days for several prominent members of the Town Council to meet at the "Woodman," a well-known tavern in the town, and to discuss Council business in a kind of informal caucus. There was nothing against the house, but the habit was, to say the least, undignified, and was strongly resented by those of the new school. Direct protest, of course, would have done more harm than good; but at last an opportunity came. It was at the time when the country rose in arms to support Mr. Plimsoll's demand that the Government should take action against unseaworthy ships. A town's meeting was held at Birmingham, presided over by the Mayor. Mr. Vince, the minister of Graham Street Chapel, was one of the speakers; a man of genial humour, who always fought smiling. In his speech he reminded the meeting that the sailor's whole life was bounded by his ship. The ship was the sailor's home, and at the same time his prison, from week to week and from month to month. It was his Free Library and his Art Gallery; "and if, Mr. Mayor," he continued, "he wants to spend an hour in the parlour of the *Woodman*, the ship must be his *Woodman* too." The Mayor of the day was generally understood to be one of the most regular frequenters of the tavern in question, and the sally was received with tumultuous laughter. Then suddenly the laughter stopped; the audience saw the reproof veiled in the jest, and with one impulse they began to applaud, steadily—one might

[1] R. W. Dale in *Henry William Crosskey: his Life and Work*, by Richard Acland Armstrong, B.A., pp. 248 foll. 1895.

almost say seriously—for several minutes. The significance of the demonstration was clear—the town had set up a new standard of dignity for its public men.

Dale, as a minister of religion, was disqualified by law for election to the Council—a disability that he was sometimes disposed to resent. But even from outside he was able to make his influence felt, in supporting those who had given themselves to municipal work, and in urging men of position and ability to undertake the public duty that lay nearest to them and that was most effective in its results, even if it involved sacrifice and drudgery. In the contests at the November elections he went into the wards, year after year, especially where the fight was close, often addressing two or three meetings a night in support of the policy that he believed would promote the welfare and the security of his fellow-townsmen. He has described the enthusiasm with which the "municipal gospel" was proclaimed by Dr. Crosskey and others, who related everything to the great principles that regulate the destiny of nations, and heralded the advent of a new millennium. His own temperament was less sanguine. He had less faith than some of his friends in the power of any change in the social order to transform the world, but he was convinced that the new policy, if it could not do everything, might do much.

But though often weary and sometimes despondent, he had a genuine and hearty delight in conflict—for high ends and great issues. He threw himself into the struggle with exultant energy. On the platform of the Town Hall the vigour with which he pulled off his overcoat as he rose to speak was a sure sign of what was coming; and when the meeting was tempestuous, as often happened when both political parties were present in force, he ploughed along through the storm with the steady rush of an Atlantic liner as it shoulders its way through blustering seas. He would fight a campaign in the same persistent spirit, night after night, week after week, without pause or check. He kept to the work until it was done, and until he felt that it was done. He was a formidable

antagonist. Once a candidate after defeat ruefully complained that all was going well in his division till Dale came down. Then there was a change. "He swept through it like a simoom," said the poor man, "and so far as my chances went he left it a desert." That was the kind of conflict that Dale enjoyed: he had a friendly feeling for the Greek hero who did "no retail fighting."

No public man ever treated his audiences, however insignificant, with greater respect. His one aim was to instruct and to convince those who had come to hear him. The very fact of their presence implied an obligation on his part to do his best for them; and his speeches on such occasions, though simple, had the simplicity that comes only by study and care. During those years a succession of serious questions came before the burgesses —the acquisition of the gas and the water-supply by the community, the provision of public parks and public buildings, a more efficient system of sanitary measures, a costly sewage scheme, the establishment of free libraries and an art gallery, a plan for sweeping away the slums in the heart of the town—great measures conceived and advocated on broad lines of municipal statesmanship, but of a kind to provoke prejudice and to call forth a false cry of economy. In dealing with such questions, Dale spoke with full and exact knowledge. He, too, could see visions and dream dreams; he never hesitated to set forth a loftier ideal than could be reached at the moment, for he believed in aiming high. But he was ready to meet critics and opponents on the ground of solid fact; to show that increased expenditure, if wisely directed, was not extravagant, and that it did not necessarily involve the raising of the rates, since all that tends to lessen sickness and crime, and to lift the general level of well-being, more than repays the cost. And against the prejudice which all social progress encounters—the selfishness that asks, Why may I not live as I like? May I not do what I will with my own?—he swept with a stern and fiery indignation. But he never lost himself in declamation. The success he sought was to kindle the enthusiasm that

spreads converts, to win their votes rather than their applause.

He believed in the dignity as well as in the duty of municipal life. Accustomed as he was in his own experience to misrepresentation and slander, which for the most part he bore without resentment, he was very jealous for the honour of those who were doing their best to serve the town. Reckless attacks on personal character, malignant aspersion of public integrity, stirred him to the depths. Once when unfounded charges of this kind had been made, he startled the company at the annual dinner given to the outgoing Mayor by the vehement passion of his protest.

Those who are entrusted with the tasks of municipal government are invested with the gravest responsibilities. To permit personal motives or the interest of any political party to affect municipal appointments or the discharge of public duty, would be to betray one of the gravest trusts with which men can entrust their fellows. I venture to say that when trusts of that sort are discharged honourably and faithfully, it is a scandal and a shame and a peril to a town to impeach the integrity of those public men who are faithfully serving it. Slander honest men in public service, and by and by we shall have no honest men to serve the public. Slander those who try to discharge their public duties faithfully, and we shall have men in office before long whom it will be impossible to slander, because they will be guilty of all the evil that will be said of them.

For the most part he worked in unbroken accord with the Liberal party in the Council, but he showed himself ready to oppose them with his whole strength on one occasion when they seemed likely to perpetuate what he considered an act of religious injustice. The conflict arose in connection with the Sunday evening lectures organised in the town. For a time these lectures, restricted to secular subjects, had been held in a Board School; but in the autumn of 1880 the attendance had so increased as to require larger accommodation, and the Town Hall was granted by the Mayor for their use during a limited period. This was in itself a departure from established

custom. It had not been usual to allow any monopoly of the Hall for a series of Sundays. Sometimes, when a congregation were temporarily unable to meet in their own place of worship, and could not find a suitable building elsewhere, the concession had been extended through a few weeks. But such cases were rare and exceptional, and although a young minister, Mr. Leach, had been granted the use of the Hall for religious services on Sunday afternoons not long before this time, the precedent had already been found inconvenient, and the Mayor, whose personal sympathy with the Lectures Committee was well known, announced that for reasons of a practical kind he had decided not to grant the Hall for future use on Sundays except under very special circumstances. This decision was strongly resented by the supporters of the lectures. A private memorial was presented to the Mayor, requesting him to reconsider his determination, but without effect. Then a member of the Council, Mr. Baldwin, gave notice of a resolution granting the free use of the Hall to the Lectures Committee for four months to come. The resolution was neither courteous to the Mayor nor reasonable in itself; it settled no principle: it opened the Hall to the lectures while it left the Mayor's decision to stand good against all other applicants.

The announcement gave the signal for a keen and excited controversy. On New Year's Day, 1881, Dale published a letter in the *Daily Post*, protesting against the policy which the Town Council were asked to adopt, declining to discuss the relative merits of lectures and sermons, but asking that the municipal authorities should not take sides with one as against the other, and that they should deal equitably both between persons and principles. He stated his objection in the following way:—

> If a couple of thousand persons who hold one theory about the religious uses of Sunday, want to assemble week after week to listen to sermons and to unite in religious worship, they have to raise £15,000 or £20,000 to erect a building, and they have to incur a heavy annual expense in keeping it in repair. If a

couple of thousand people who hold another theory about the religious uses of Sunday, want to assemble week after week to listen to lectures, it is inequitable for the municipal authorities to step in to relieve them of similar responsibilities. It would be unjust for the town to place its one great building at the service of those who believe that the best hours of Sunday should be used for religious purposes; it is equally unjust for the town to place its one great building at the service of those who think differently. The duty of reserving Sunday for religious purposes is a principle held very tenaciously by tens of thousands of the ratepayers of Birmingham. The promoters of the Sunday evening lectures are agreed in renouncing this principle, and they are giving effect to their conviction. Two principles are in open conflict. The Town Council should decline to give any advantage to one principle which it cannot give to the other.

He referred to his own action when an attempt had been made by some of the local clergy to close the Board Schools against the lectures, and to allow the school-rooms to be used on a Sunday for religious services alone. That demand he had resisted as a violation of the principle of religious equality. Some of the rooms were let for religious services and for Sunday Schools; it was unjust, therefore, to exclude those who wanted rooms for secular lectures. There was accommodation for both parties, and in dealing with buildings erected and maintained at the public expense, it would be gross unfairness to deny to one section of the community a privilege conceded to the other. He applied the same principle to the present case. The Town Hall—the one building of its kind—ought to be at the disposal of all parties, and the only way of securing that end was to grant the use of it only in emergencies. The fact that Mr. Leach had been allowed to use it on Sunday afternoons for many weeks in succession did not solve the difficulty, but raised it in a new form. Other ministers who had made a similar request had been refused; why should one man be admitted while others were excluded? As the spokesman of the general opinion among the Nonconformists of the town, and supported in his contention by a ministers'

memorial, he urged that Mr. Baldwin's resolution should be rejected.

For several days the controversy continued without any abatement of interest. The newspapers were filled with letters from partisans of either side. Dale was violently attacked by the supporters of the lectures for the part that he had taken. He had made up his mind; his blood was up; he would not budge an inch. Two days before the Council met, on the Sunday evening, he discussed the issue placed before the town and its representatives, preaching from the text, "That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live."[1] The question of Sabbath observance had been raised in the controversy. One over-zealous friend of the movement had expressed a hope that he might live to see the time when two teams from St. Martin's and Carr's Lane would play a football match on a Sunday afternoon, while the rector and the minister looked on. Some had denounced Dale and his supporters as narrow-minded Sabbatarians. In his discourse he took occasion to state his real opinions on that subject, which were by no means in accordance with rigid tradition. But this, as Dale pointed out, was altogether beside the question. The wisdom or the futility of Sabbath observance was not a matter with which the Town Council had anything to do. Its members had not been elected to decide such questions; it was not a matter in which their opinion could have any authority. Two distinct theories as to the right use of the Sunday prevailed in the community; the duty of the Council, as trustees for the community, was to dispense justice evenly to all sections of those whom they represented. Mr. Baldwin's resolution he objected to as unjust; he also demurred to an arrangement suggested as a compromise, which would have made it possible to interrupt any continuous occupation of the Hall by any one portion of the community.

It would be in my power, no doubt, to give early notice that I should want the Hall to preach in for two Sundays in the

[1] Deuteronomy xvi. 20.

middle of next September, and by doing this I should break the continuous use of the Hall by the lecturers during that month; and Mr. Platten[1] might apply for the Hall for two or three Sundays in October, and so break the continuous use of the Hall during the next month. The same process might be repeated month after month, and those who go to the lectures in the Hall, because they are unable to attend any existing place of worship, would be subjected to perpetual disturbance and annoyance. Some of them might even go to the Hall expecting to be instructed and edified by a lecture on the War in Afghanistan, by Major Bond, and to their distress might find me preaching some obsolete evangelical superstition, and telling men that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him may not perish, but have everlasting life."

My first impulse when I heard of Mr. Baldwin's resolution was to challenge the justice of the Council by applying for the use of the Hall for a month for religious services; and, of course, under the amendment which I am now discussing, I could make the application and so prevent that continuous use of the Hall by the lecturers to which I object. There is a great deal of the old Adam in me yet. I like peace, and yet when provoked to a fight, the fire is apt to kindle at a touch and to break out into a sudden blaze. And it would be perfectly legitimate for those of us who want the Hall used fairly, to break the continuity of the lectures by these recurring interruptions. But it would be singularly ungracious to do it. It could not be done without continual irritation. It would produce division and animosity among men who, whatever their religious differences, have in past years not only observed in public those kindly courtesies which sweeten public life, but have been cordial friends in private. It would imperil their harmonious co-operation in municipal and philanthropic movements.

To state the case in a single sentence: This amendment would either leave to the lecturers the usual occupancy of the Hall, disturbed only by emergencies, which is the favoured position of the Musical Association, or it would require the "sects" to break up their occupancy by arranging for special religious services.

I object to both alternatives.

The continuous use of the Hall by the lecturers identifies the whole town with the movement; if in order to prevent this continuous use the "sects" are required to interfere with the

[1] Minister of Graham Street Baptist Chapel, and of the "Church of the Redeemer."

regular delivery of the lectures in the same building, this is to impose on us a most ungracious task.

It had been alleged that Sabbatarian prejudice was the real source of the opposition, and that the protest should therefore be ignored. In the closing passages of the sermon he dealt with this view, not attempting to disguise his indignation and his pain.

The brief summary of several letters which have been published during the last week is this: We are not sure that we can answer the argument that for the lecturers to have the continuous use of the Hall is unjust, but the energy with which the argument is urged receives all its inspiration from Sabbatarian zeal; and therefore we are resolved not to listen to it.

And have we come to this? Is there any section of the community so despised, so loathed, so hated, that even when it asks for bare justice from the Liberals of Birmingham it is not to be listened to? If there be, then whether it consists of my theological and political opponents, or of my theological and political friends, I for my part am resolved to stand by it against every storm of abuse, and to press its righteous demands on the town until they are conceded to the uttermost farthing.

No doubt the present demand for justice at the hands of the Town Council derives immense force from the strength of that attachment to the traditional Sunday which is offended by the secular lectures. What then? This does not make the demand less just; and it is the grossest intolerance to refuse the demand for justice merely because it comes from a theological antagonist. But it is not the Sabbatarians alone who press this demand. It is pressed by large numbers of men who do not share Sabbatarian opinions, but who are resolved that if they can prevent it the Town Council shall not deal unjustly with men of any religious opinions.

The mere apprehension that even unconsciously and unintentionally the Town Council should do this wrong, wounds me like a dagger. For that fair ideal of municipal life, which for many years past we have been trying to realise in this borough, I have felt a passionate enthusiasm. Restrained by law from being a candidate myself for a seat in the Council—for an Act of Parliament imposes this disability on all ministers of religion—and prevented by the pressure of other engagements from rendering all the public service I would willingly have rendered in other ways, it has been my happiness and my pride to be permitted to sustain, according to the limited

measure of my strength and resources, those whose powers and whose zeal have made them the leaders of this movement. They have been good enough to accept me as a comrade. I have shared their hopes; I have accepted their principles; I have watched their work with admiration; I have exulted in their triumphs. When I was in America three years ago, there was no subject connected with English life of which I spoke to my American friends more frequently than of our dreams of what might be achieved by municipal government; there was no subject on which I was listened to with keener interest. I told them that in Birmingham, we had come to think it one of the proudest distinctions to be entrusted with municipal office; that many of the wealthiest, the ablest, the most cultivated, the most honourable of our citizens were inspired with a generous loyalty to the town, which made them willing and eager to accept the tasks of local administration and government; that the great mass of the ratepayers were gradually being penetrated by the same spirit; that we were resolved to spare no strength and no cost that might be necessary to improve and ennoble the conditions of life for the whole people. It would be the fading away of one of the most charming and animating visions that I have cherished, if this municipal enthusiasm were to be quenched, or if its achievements were impaired by division and strife. You have already done much; but very much remains to be done.

The whole condition, the very appearance, of the town has been transfigured during the last ten years. You have built noble schools; other great schemes of educational reform are being projected; and in a few years the intellectual life of the whole community will be raised to a loftier level. You have erected libraries; and the loveliest and most majestic songs of famous poets, the passion and sorrow, the humour and wisdom of great dramatists, the largest and the deepest speculations of the ancient and the modern world, are brought within reach of all the people. You will soon make noble paintings and noble sculpture—hitherto the exclusive possession of the wealthy—the joy of the poorest man among us that has the eye to discover their dignity, their grace, and their beauty. The fires of private munificence have been kindled by the fervour of public zeal. We may not rival, we may not reproduce, the splendid and brilliant civic life of the great cities of Italy; for the history of every great and powerful community, like the history of every vigorous individual, is always fresh, unprecedented, and original. But if we are true to each other, and true to the town, we may do deeds as great as were done by Pisa, by Florence, by Venice

in their triumphant days. What has been done already has been done by the maintenance of mutual respect among men who have had a common love for the town, but who, on questions of the deepest and most vital interest to the human race, were widely separated from each other. It has been done by the cultivation of courtesy and consideration for the conflicting beliefs of those who were animated by a common zeal for the improvement of the general condition of the community. We have tried to be fair to each other; we have tried to be generous. And, notwithstanding the heat of recent discussions, I have a strong confidence that the same wise and equitable and considerate spirit which has found a satisfactory solution for difficulties which have troubled us before, will find a solution equally satisfactory for the difficulty I have been discussing to-night. We shall be most likely to find it if all parties in this controversy listen to the ancient words, "That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live."

Copies of the sermon and of the letter to the *Daily Post* were sent to every member of the Town Council. It was clear that if defeated at the moment he would not abandon the struggle, and that he would strike, when the time came, with all his force. When the Council met on the Tuesday, the issue was already decided. Mr. Baldwin's resolution was withdrawn without discussion, and an immediate adjournment was voted by an overwhelming majority. It was a striking testimony to the power of Dale's public influence and leadership.

Mr. J. Thackray Bunce, one of his oldest colleagues in public work, and in later life the closest of his friends in Birmingham, has been good enough to add the following estimate of Dale's position and influence in the life of the city:—

Mr. J. Thackray Bunce.

It is very difficult to describe in terms at all adequate to its duration, extent, and variety, the influence which Dr. Dale exerted upon the political and municipal life of Birmingham. There was no phase of public work in which his great personality was not manifested, or in which his powerful influence and consistent example were not felt. Religious movements of course claimed his first care; and with them were linked charitable and

Mr. J. Thackray Bunce.

social organisations and efforts for the relief of suffering, and the brightening of the lives, purifying the homes, and enlarging the opportunities of the labouring classes among his fellow-citizens. Municipal affairs engaged much of his attention; he helped to raise the quality of the Town Council, to lift its ideals of duty, and to mould its progressive policy. When any considerable question affecting the welfare of the town was prominent, he argued it out frankly and boldly by speaking at ward meetings held for the choice of candidates for seats in the governing body, and he took a large and influential share in the councils of those who strove to guide the municipal policy into broader and purer channels. He was active also, and foremost, in the conduct of the imperial politics which interested Birmingham people, and in regard to which Birmingham often set the lead for the country. For many years he was a chief speaker at the greater political assemblies; and he also took a principal and often a deciding part in the management of the Liberal Association, of which, from its commencement, he was a member of the inner council, and from which he reluctantly separated only when Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy made further co-operation impossible. As an estimate of the position he held in regard to Birmingham life the following sentences, written by one who knew him intimately, and who for many years had worked with him in municipal and national politics, may be quoted. They appeared in an article in the *Birmingham Daily Post* on the morning after Dr. Dale's death.

> Nearly fifty years of Dr. Dale's life were spent amongst us; for more than forty years he was prominent amongst the vivifying forces of the town; there was hardly any part of our life as a community which he did not touch, and, in touching, which he did not strengthen and brighten and elevate. In religious effort, in politics, in education, in social movements, in charity, in the administration of great institutions, in the cultivation of literature, he was ever amongst the most earnest, the most laborious, and the most renowned. He was known to all his fellow-citizens, he was familiar and friendly with all,

he sympathised with all, by his confidence he won theirs, and with confidence they gave him a full tribute of admiration. Whenever a Birmingham man spoke of those who did honour to the town, the name of Dale was earliest on his lips; whenever strangers came here, he was one of the men whom they most desired to see. From these sentences may be gathered our general sense of the loss under which we now suffer; but only those who were in closer association with him—his own people, who mourn a beloved pastor, his intimate personal friends who found in his society an unceasing source of strength and refreshment—only those can estimate, and even they cannot express, the pain of separation, and the depth of the void which his removal has created. There are many amongst us to whom life will never be the same in its brightness and fulness and hopefulness and tenderness, now that we no longer have him to share it with us.

Mr. J. Thackray Bunce.

Something must be said of the causes which in the course of years built up the commanding influence which Dr. Dale exerted in the political and municipal life of Birmingham. First and deepest of these was the conviction of duty which animated him, and the sense of combined obligation and responsibility under which this duty was fulfilled. With him service to the country and to the community was part of his religion. In his Yale Lectures, when speaking of "the law of Christ in relation to public duty," he put this with force and clearness. "For men," he said, "to claim the right to neglect their duties to the State on the ground of their piety, while they insist on the State protecting their homes, protecting their property, and protecting from disturbance even their religious meetings in which this exquisitely delicate and valetudinarian spirituality is developed, is gross unrighteousness." This dictum expresses the rule of his public life. By this standard he measured the claims of whatever work opened itself before him. If it was clearly for the good of the community, then he felt it to be his duty, as part of his religion, to take part in it, without any thought of the time occupied, or the labour involved, of opposition to be encountered, of misrepresentation to be endured, or of personal sacrifices to be made.

Mr. J. Thackray Bunce.

In doing such work two of his most notable characteristics were brought into play—his judgment and his independence. He weighed all questions with deliberation before deciding upon his own course. No merely sentimental feeling influenced his line of action. Before he committed himself to writing or speech, he satisfied himself of the right of the cause which claimed his advocacy, and in so doing he invariably gave full weight to whatever could be said against as well as for the conclusions which gradually formed themselves in his mind. Of course there were matters—such as religious and political and personal freedom—which, so to speak, made themselves; on which the arguments were all one way; in regard to which hesitation would, in his view, be a crime. But on all questions which in any reasonable sense were debatable, his decisions were slowly formed, were tested in all possible ways, and were announced only after the most anxious deliberation. In a word, his judgments were sagacious, and were so recognised. When his mind was made up, those who followed his leadership, or who were influenced by his counsels, knew that he knew what ought to be aimed at, and how far it could be accomplished. Then, as driving his conclusions practically home, came the effect of his independence. Absolutely fearless and perfectly candid, he never failed to state his views with clearness, or to maintain them with steadfastness and courage, whether they were popular or unpopular. When he had mastered the truth, he never wavered in proclaiming it: nothing would move him, no timid counsels influenced him, he admitted no compromise even for a moment. With him the clear apprehension of a truth, and of the means to be taken to enforce it, involved the fulfilment of a sacred obligation, a Divine command. It was the "Thus saith the Lord" of the Hebrew prophets applied to the concerns of our modern life. There, to his mind, was the truth; it had to be spoken out with firmness and fulness: there could be no concealment, no compromise, no "economising" for the comfort of weaker brethren. The general recognition

of these conditions was a great source of his influence: all men knew that he had deliberately formed his convictions; and all knew that to those convictions he would unswervingly adhere. Mr. J. Thackray Bunce.

His manliness and his eloquence materially helped to strengthen his influence. He was literally a "power" on the platform: his voice could reach the farthest limit of the largest audiences; his robust and vigorous personality impressed all hearers; when he rose to speak there fell upon the assembly the hush which testifies the recognition of a great orator; and as he developed his argument his manifest sincerity and his deep earnestness produced an irresistible, an ineffaceable impression even on the most indifferent or the most hostile of those who listened to him.

To sum up this imperfect Appreciation, these were the main sources of Dr. Dale's great influence on the political, municipal, and social life of the community in which, and for which, his life was spent—conviction of duty, deliberation in judgment, sagacity in counsel, earnestness in action, unreserved candour and unfaltering courage in declaring and maintaining the truth as he saw it; and with these his power of sustained argument, and his gift of eloquent speech; and yet again his instinctive faculty of touch with all that was noble, or intellectual, or sympathetic in the minds of those who listened to him.

CHAPTER XVII

THE NEW LIBERALISM

The New Liberalism in national politics—The course of politics after 1874—"Mr. Dale's representative"—The Eastern Question—The Liberal Federation—Mr. Gladstone at Birmingham—Dale's dilemma—Letter to Canon Bright; an appeal to the clergy—A foolish insult—The Afghan war—The right to preserve order in public meeting—"*Liberal candidates at the next election*"—The election of 1880—Candidates and constituencies—The new Ministry—Mr. Bradlaugh and the oath—"*Atheism and the House of Commons*"—A letter of comfort to Mr. Bright—Native races in South Africa—The Liberal programme; the county franchise and London government—Dale's doubts—The Penjdeh crisis—England and Russia—Letters to Mr. Chamberlain—The election of 1885.

POLITICAL affairs and municipal affairs are often contrasted in a false and mischievous antithesis, as if the interests of the city and the empire were discrepant or even hostile. This was not Dale's belief. He admitted grades in social obligation, but regarded the claims as complementary, not as antagonistic. For himself political and municipal service could not be divorced. The same law of Christian duty applied to each. Christ is both Prince and Saviour. He came into the world both to rule and to redeem. Those who are loyal to His authority must share His work of redemption. His redemptive sovereignty must be made effective both in the life of the city and of the State. And man was created in Christ and for Christ—"created to share His eternal life and blessedness, to be one with Him as He is one with the Father; and His relationship to humanity is so intimate and so real that He could say without metaphor or exaggeration, 'Inasmuch as ye did it to one of these

least, ye did it unto Me.'"[1] Possessed by such conceptions of political duty, Dale was naturally drawn to identify himself with what has been described as the "new school" of Liberalism. Not that he was willing to break with the past; for he believed with Burke that in national life "we must start from where we are"; that progress must come through development and not by any breach of continuity. But he had moved forward from the traditional standpoint of his political and ecclesiastical ancestors. He did not regard government as a necessary evil, nor empire as a peril to the imperial race, necessarily involving injustice to subject races. He welcomed every enlargement of national enterprise that promised to achieve its purpose with efficiency, and any extension of imperial territory where our rule might establish order and justice in the place of strife and iniquity. Between the spirit of the older Liberalism and the spirit of the new he recognised an essential difference. Justice had been the watchword of the one; pity now inspired the other. The individualism of an earlier generation had demanded freedom that the strong might achieve success in the full measure of their strength, but it had done nothing to help the weak; it had applied in politics the scientific law of the survival of the fittest. Since then the temper of Liberalism had softened, and he belonged to the new age. His political influence was the more remarkable because he seldom appeared on a purely political platform outside Birmingham. But the position of leadership that he held during the education controversy, the disestablishment campaign undertaken with Dr. Guinness Rogers, his intimate connection with the Birmingham Liberal Association at a time when its methods of organisation were being copied in many other constituencies, and his speeches on public questions, had made him known to Nonconformists and their allies in every part of the kingdom.

The dissolution of 1874, when Mr. Gladstone made his precipitate appeal to the country, found the main

[1] *Fellowship with Christ*, p. 169; see also *Contemporary Review*, April 1883, pp. 493 foll., "M. Gambetta, Positivism and Christianity."

body of Nonconformists disaffected if not in revolt. Dale shared in this discontent. He had no desire to see a Liberal government in office, indifferent to the principles of Liberalism and without a Liberal policy. The inducement which Mr. Gladstone offered to the nation to restore him to power, Dale regarded with contempt. "The Liberal party," he declared before the Birmingham electors, "does not exist for the repeal of the Income tax." He held that such a bribe must discredit a minister who offered it and the citizens who accepted it. He also resented Mr. Gladstone's references to his educational policy in his address to the Greenwich electors; and though unwilling that Nonconformists should sever their allegiance to the Liberal party, he felt that for a time at least they must resolve to stand alone and to do their own work in their own way. Mr. Gladstone's defeat at the polls caused him little regret. A period of exclusion from office, he thought, might prove a salutary experience for the Liberal leaders. The air of the Opposition benches was favourable to the development of robust conviction, and when the Liberal party returned to power it would be with an invigorated faith in the principles that they professed.

But however dissatisfied he may have been with the policy of Mr. Gladstone's government at a time when it had outlived the ardour and freshness of its faith, he soon became conscious that power had passed into dangerous hands. Again and again he found it necessary to unite in public protest against the action or the inaction of the Conservative Ministry. He spoke in support of Mr. Plimsoll's agitation for the reform of the merchant-shipping laws, and in condemnation of the Circular in which the officers of our fleet were directed to surrender fugitive slaves who had taken refuge under the British flag. He shared the growing alarm excited by Mr. Disraeli's foreign policy.

Before the storm in Eastern Europe had come to a head, his friend Mr. Chamberlain was elected to represent the borough. The seat was not contested, but both the candidate and his supporters were vigorously assailed by the

Tory press. One London newspaper, always obscure and long since extinct, declared that the Birmingham Radicals were about to extinguish themselves by choosing a man who had shown himself utterly unfit for such a position. Better men, it asserted, had been passed over, simply because "Mr. R. W. Dale has nominated Mr. Chamberlain, and the will of Mr. Dale is the will of Birmingham." Addressing his constituents in Bingley Hall, Mr. Chamberlain, in reply to a vote of congratulation, referred to this allegation, taking the opportunity to pay a generous tribute to his friend and fellow-worker.

I have seen a statement that I go to Parliament as the representative of Mr. Dale. Well, if that be so, there is not a member of the House of Commons who will have a better, wiser, or nobler constituency. But you will at least remember this: that if Mr. Dale has any influence over the 50,000 electors of Birmingham, he owes it to his devotion to their highest interests, he owes it to his eloquent and out-spoken advocacy of all that is good and great.

In the course of a few weeks the political outlook became dark and tempestuous. The intentions of the Government were studiously concealed, but there was good reason to fear that we might find ourselves dragged into war to defend the integrity of the Turkish Empire. Then came the news of the Bulgarian massacres, stirring the horror of the nation. In the movement that followed, Dale took an active part. He had already urged that the Government had no right to keep the nation in the dark, and that the Opposition before the prorogation of Parliament should exact a definite statement on the position of foreign affairs. Now he threw himself without reserve into the struggle. At the first town's-meeting on the question held in Birmingham, he moved a resolution demanding that the Christian provinces should no longer be left under Turkish rule. In the assembly of the Congregational Union he proposed a motion expressing sympathy with the policy advocated by Mr. Gladstone, who was then doing battle with staunch foes and half-hearted friends in the House of Commons.

At the end of May 1877, Mr. Gladstone visited Birmingham to inaugurate the newly-formed Liberal Federation, representing the Liberal Associations throughout the country. Thirty thousand people met in Bingley Hall to hear him. Dale, who moved the chief resolution, had an unpleasant and unwonted experience. Before he had spoken for more than a few minutes, the crowd, closely packed in stifling heat, became impatient for Mr. Gladstone, and showed it. Under ordinary conditions he would have sat down immediately, but in the afternoon he had given his speech to the *Times* reporter, who had sent it at once to London, and he felt bound to go through with it. In the following letter he does not refer to his misadventure.

To the Rev. Dr. Wace

4th June 1877.

We are getting quiet after our political dissipation of last week. The Federation of Associations, if it fulfils the purpose of its promoters, may have a very considerable effect on the fortunes of the Liberal party. It is an attempt to form a political church without a creed, and without a bishop, and without a synod. The experiment is an odd one, but has great merits, as I think; if the founders of the church have sufficient political knowledge, brains, judgment, and temper—I can answer, I think, for their resoluteness and for their knowledge of their own creed—they may do a considerable stroke of work. They wanted me to take some official position in the movement, but if the movement turns out a success, an official position will mean more work than I can find time for. Gladstone's coming gave the thing a great impulse at starting. By the way did you ever see a finer figure than that about the shelving rocks? The root of it is in his article on Montenegro in the *Nineteenth Century*.[1]

[1] "It was those nations who broke the force of the advancing deluge, and left of the deluge only so much as the rest of Europe was able to repel. They were like a shelving beach which restrained the ocean. That beach, it is true, is beaten by the waves, it is laid desolate, it produces nothing; it becomes perhaps nothing but a mass of shingle, of rock, of almost useless sea-weed; but it is a fence behind which the cultivated earth can spread, and escape the incoming tide; and so it was against the Turk—the resistance of Bulgarians, of Servians, of Greeks, a resistance in which one by one they

During the autumn months of 1877 Dale was in America, but immediately upon his return he took the field again. He arranged for a conference of Nonconformist ministers in the Midlands to protest against war; and he also wrote to Canon Bright of Christ Church, Oxford, urging on him the advisability of organising a similar expression of opinion on the part of the clergy at Oxford.

To the Rev. Canon Bright

4th January 1878.

There are the gravest reasons to fear that the present position of the Cabinet in relation to the war is far worse than is generally supposed. From sources which seemed trustworthy, reports reached Birmingham last week that all the Ministers except Lord Carnarvon had yielded to the influence of Lord Beaconsfield. I see that the *Times* of this morning is by no means reassured by Lord Carnarvon's speech.

About the temper of the country I am becoming increasingly hopeful—if only the question of Russian occupation of Constantinople can be kept out of sight for a time. Chambers of Commerce and Town Councils in all parts of the country are exploding at a touch. But I confess that if the Prime Minister assumed the responsibility of saying publicly that he believed Russia means to occupy Constantinople, and that it was essential to the security of British interests that this should be resisted—I say, if he were to say this, I think it would be difficult to repress a demand for war.

The difficulty lies in this:—the responsible leaders of public opinion on our side naturally shrink from pronouncing the word *Constantinople:* if they declared that in their judgment Russia might take it and India be just as safe as before, the Cabinet would charge them with provoking Russia to seize it. A speech or two by Mr. Gladstone categorically affirming that Russia might take the capital of the Porte without affecting "British Interests" would bring the greater part of the Liberal party right very soon, but he cannot take this position.

succumbed, with the exception of the glorious mountaineers of Montenegro who have never succumbed" (*Times*, 1st June 1877). "It was those races, principally Slavonian, who had to encounter in its unbroken strength and to reduce the mighty wave, of which only the residue, passing the Danube and the Save, all but overwhelmed not Hungary alone, but Austria and Poland."—*Nineteenth Century*, May 1877, vol. i. p. 361.

The officers of the Liberal Association of Birmingham—a local body—have been hard at work for the last week or ten days, and the meetings and resolutions of Town Councils and Chambers of Commerce in different parts of the country are largely owing to their initiative and prompting. Early this week the Executive of the Union of Liberal Associations—a national body—met in Birmingham, and there were present representatives from, I think, about thirty-five towns; letters came from a large number besides. There was, at first, hesitation on the part of some as to the expediency of agitating at once; but after a little discussion all saw that "Mediation" was very likely to drift into "Intervention," and it was agreed to do immediately whatever could be done in the way of town meetings and petitions to Parliament. I hope that the sudden collapse of "Mediation" will not suppress the agitation.

In conjunction with two friends I called together a private meeting of the Nonconformist ministers of Birmingham yesterday afternoon and they resolved to call a Conference of Nonconformist ministers living in the town and immediate neighbourhood. We meet next week. I intend to have the circular which is now being printed, sent to my friends in different parts of the country to incense them to act in the same way.

Surely the clergy might act: there must be enough of them right to make it worth while to secure their combined action. Further, those that will not act against the Turk will hardly dare to act for him, so that the testimony which you and I would desire would hardly be enfeebled by counter-testimony. I mean that as an active force at the present moment the clerical opponents of a war on behalf of Turkey—even though a minority of the clergy—would outweigh the rest of their brethren. Do you remember what a great effect the memorial from the fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, had, about fourteen months ago? Could not something like that be done at Oxford? As for a national memorial, if it is desirable, the Eastern Association people in London might take it in charge. My fear is that there is not time to obtain a memorial that would represent the strength of feeling which exists on the question.

His activity was not restricted to the desk and the committee room. Between the middle of January and the middle of February 1878, he addressed four great meetings—one of them a town's-meeting, summoned at the unusual hour of noon, to protest against the vote of credit (£6,000,000) asked for by the Ministry, and another

convened by the Birmingham Conservatives to counteract the effect of the previous demonstration. At this an amendment hostile to the resolution of confidence in the Government was proposed, and several of the Liberal leaders spoke—or attempted to speak—in its support. Dale was one of the number. When he rose, a placard was displayed from the platform with the inscription—"Down with the Radical parsons! We are the Bible party." It was a piece of puerile impertinence, but the offence was keenly resented by the audience. During the next few days letters of apology came pouring in from prominent Conservatives, and the young man who had displayed the bill made a lame attempt to show that he had done so without knowing what was on it. The incident was trivial enough, but it showed that Dale's public position had now become such that the best men in both parties felt that an insult to him was an insult to the town.

War with Russia was avoided, but peace was still insecure. Late in the autumn of 1878 came the Afghan war, and with it a new call to arms. The previous conflict, even after Mr. Gladstone took the field, was in the main a soldiers' battle: the rank and file and the non-commissioned officers of the Liberal party in the country had held their ground while their official leaders wavered or even divided in counsel. But now Liberal opinion was solid. In both Houses of Parliament the Government found itself confronted by opponents who spoke with the knowledge and authority of official experience.

In Birmingham one controversy gave rise to another —as to the right of preserving order in public meetings. The wave of violence which had rolled over the country a few months earlier had not spent its force. The "Jingoes" were still rampant; in several places they had broken up assemblies gathered to protest against the war. There, as elsewhere, the town's-meeting held to discuss the question of the hour was a scene of discreditable disorder. Lord Beaconsfield's supporters had mustered, in response to a circular, resolved that no speaker should be

heard; and but for the action of the Mayor, Alderman Collings,[1] one of two things must have happened—either the disturbers of the meeting, though a minority, would have effected their purpose; or they would have been expelled by the majority after a fierce and dangerous fight. It was by no means the first attempt that had been made to render free speech impossible, and the Mayor was determined to uphold the right of public meeting. Acting under his orders, the police ejected from the Hall several persons who had made themselves conspicuous in uproar. His conduct was fiercely resented. Criminal proceedings were taken against him, and the case was heard by the Stipendiary magistrate, but after a long and embittered controversy the result proved abortive, so far as concerned the principle at issue. The Stipendiary's decision was adverse to the Mayor: he imposed a small fine, consenting to state a case for an appeal to a superior court. But, through an unfortunate misunderstanding, the case, as he drafted it, did not raise the question in dispute between the parties to the summons; he could not be induced to insert the one material fact; and Sir Henry James advised that "it would be beside the question to be arguing a case which the magistrate so states as not to touch the only point the defendant ever raised or was desirous to raise." The Recorder of Birmingham, Mr. J. S. Dugdale, was of the same mind, and significantly added to his opinion—"The Mayor, of course, will in future take whatever steps may appear to him to be necessary for the preservation of peace and order at public meetings."

The Stipendiary's original decision and his subsequent conduct were strongly condemned, and by no one more strongly than by Dale. At the members' meeting in April he proposed a vote of thanks to the Mayor for presiding and also for his recent action in defence of the right of public meeting. His criticism of the Stipendiary's judgment was good-humoured, though he protested against the theory implied in it—that it is not the meeting that

[1] The Right Hon. Jesse Collings, M.P. for Bordesley.

the law protects, but the men who disturb it. In a second and more elaborate speech delivered a few weeks later, he reasserted his contention, maintaining that the right of free speech in a free country was of supreme importance, and should be asserted at any cost; and the right of public meeting, he argued, involved the right of protection against the violence and uproar by which the purpose of such assemblies is defeated. Recognising that the law might be uncertain in its relation to public meetings, which were a thing of modern growth, he laid stress upon the necessity of knowing the facts, that Parliament, if necessary, might be asked to take action. On this occasion he examined the Stipendiary's judgment in detail, courteously but relentlessly, with a skill and a force justifying the opinion so often expressed that he had the gifts that make a great advocate and command the highest offices of the law.

During the summer of 1879 it was clear that the general election could not be long delayed. In all parts of the country politicians were making ready for the coming struggle. The lesson taught by the experience of 1874 had not been forgotten, and the Liberal leaders did not cease to impress on their followers the necessity of unity if they were to escape a second defeat. But in some quarters there was a disposition to assume that all concession must come from one wing of the party, and that the advanced men should defer everywhere to the "moderates." Dale discussed the question in the *Fortnightly Review*,[1] admitting the issue of the election to be uncertain, though he wrote with the vigour and buoyancy that portend success. He pointed out that in recent conflicts Tory seats had been won by Radicals, not by Whigs, and that in attack no decisive victory could be gained without enthusiasm. He and his friends were not unwilling to bear reproof, and to turn the cheek when smitten; "but if the moderates are to be allowed to do all the smiting, and the advanced men are required to exercise all the

1 "Liberal Candidates at the next Election": *Fortnightly Review*, June 1879.

self-restraint," that was hardly fair: it was "tyranny disguised under the name of toleration." Such a policy was unsafe as well as unjust. The Liberal party, to be of any good, must consist of Liberals; and the moderates, it had been found, contributed very little to the strength of the Liberal party when in power, and greatly increased its weakness when in opposition. Men of enthusiasm, men of conviction, would not fight "for a banner with all the colour washed out of it." An attempt to discourage or to disavow the advanced men must be fatal to any hope of success. Mutual concession and a common understanding, loyally observed by both sections of the party, were essential if they were to defeat the Ministry against whose policy they had so often protested in vain.

Speaking at Reading on the evening after the dissolution of 1880 was announced, Dale indicated clearly the line that he intended to take in the struggle. For himself he distinctly refused to raise the question of Church Disestablishment in such a crisis. The one question was whether a candidate was a Liberal or not; whether he had a genuine and hearty distrust of Lord Beaconsfield and of his policy, which threatened to corrupt the political morality of the nation and to undermine the stability of national institutions. On those lines he fought steadily both in Birmingham and elsewhere. He spoke night after night in the various wards of the borough. He went to Bradford in the cause of political conciliation, to speak for Forster and Illingworth, and also to Wrexham and elsewhere. Of the letters that follow, the first two illustrate the care and precision of his advice; the last three were written during the election, when success was already assured.

To Mr. Henry Lee

2nd October 1876.

In the main I think that Mr. —— is right. You might find it very inconvenient to be definitely pledged to stand for Northampton, or for any other borough. A general election may not

come on for some time yet, and a great deal may happen before it takes place.

The position of Northampton is very simple. If two Liberal candidates can work together, the two seats are practically certain; but Bradlaugh will continue to stand till he dies. He is very tough and resolute. You, I believe, would command the strong and united support of the section of the party to which Bradlaugh is intolerable; but that section could not return you by plumping. There would be no need to have a united committee; but for success it would be imperative that your influence should be used with your friends to induce them to split votes with Bradlaugh; if this were done, his people would, I have no doubt, split their votes with you, and you would both be carried. You need not, as I have said, have the same committee; you need not go to the same meetings; but an informal alliance, loyally accepted, is essential to winning.

I see no reason why you should not consent to this in the event of your standing. There are large numbers of men in the House who have just as little faith as Bradlaugh, and with whom the most Christian men are perfectly willing to run.

You might tell any deputation that waits on you that you are disposed to entertain the proposal, but that it would be unwise for either them or you to make a pledge while the time of an election is so uncertain; and that you must, further, in the event of standing, have a clear assurance that they will do their best to induce those who vote for you to split with Bradlaugh.

20th December 1878.

The Southampton figures show better than I expected. Russell Gurney was as good a candidate as the Conservatives are ever likely to have, and the returns indicate that Giles at the top of the Conservative reaction polled only 18 more than he did. It is very hard if you cannot get 300 out of 400 that polled for Perkins and did not poll for Moffatt; and with 100 or 200 less on the Conservative side from the ebbing of the tide this would give you a good majority. In any case—or almost in any case—you would have to fight for a seat now held by a Tory, and Southampton seems to promise as well as most places.

The only drawback is what Cox says about a *commercial* candidate. You are not a commercial candidate in his sense; you could take no patronage to Southampton that Bompas could not take. Commercial *knowledge*, as I understand him, is not the special want, but *interest* which would tell on the trade of

the place. You ought to learn whether there is any chance of a working-man's candidate.

As to the expenses, I gave £2000 as the sum of which I heard when I was at Southampton, and I doubt whether you would find any considerable borough in the Midlands or Southern counties which you could fight for much less. In Lancashire I suppose that the local Liberals would share the expenses, but to Southerners every Lancashire man seems rich, and they assume that he will pay as a matter of course. If the election is short and sharp Southampton might cost less; but if there is any adequate notice, I doubt whether you could get through for less than £2000. It is possible that the formation of a Liberal Association will lighten the cost by securing more volunteer work; Cox ought to know whether this is likely.

Don't put too much confidence in what they tell you about the teetotallers having learnt a lesson at the last election. They are slow to learn and swift to forget.

To Mr. T. H. Gill

4th April 1880.

Yes, the Liberal victory is wonderful. Had Beaconsfield determined to go on a few months longer I think that the inertia of the English people would have continued to give an apparent sanction to his policy; but when the case was really opened the revolt was precipitated. Speaking at Reading on the evening after the dissolution was announced, I said that perhaps the Tories might keep a majority of ten, though if we were loyal we might turn them out altogether; but the complete destruction of their power is amazing.

To Mr. Henry Lee

Birmingham, *4th April* 1880.

The news of your victory[1] reached me at the Liberal Club last night soon after nine o'clock, while, I suppose, you were still talking to your comrades and praising their zeal in the fight. I telegraphed my congratulations at once, and the telegram must have reached you soon after you were good enough to send the glorious news to me. I need not say how heartily I rejoice in your success, and with what confidence I look forward to the loyal service you will render to every good cause in the House.

[1] At Southampton.

Out of the House, too, your new position will enable you to render increased service to causes which you have served before.

I suppose you will try to get a quiet time before the House meets. A man needs to steady himself after going through the whirl of an election. It is well to look up and to see that the eternal stars are just where they were.

TO THE REV. DR. GUINNESS ROGERS

11th April 1880.

Yes; it is, as you say, "a great deliverance," and passes all my hopes. I seem to have woke out of a bad dream, and the wickedness and folly of the past six years seem as though they could have had no place in the actual life of the world. We hope to start to-morrow.[1] I am very tired. My strength seems spent.

Do you know I spoke at *Forster* and Illingworth's first meeting? Could Christian charity and the "consolidation of co-operation" go farther?

Both Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain were included in the new Cabinet, and it was with sanguine hope that their friends welcomed their acceptance of office. But almost from the outset the course of the Liberal Government was beset with difficulty and disaster, partly inherited, partly of their own making. The Bradlaugh controversy, Egyptian affairs, the troubles in South Africa, and the rapid growth of disaffection in Ireland, sorely strained the loyalty of those whose trust in Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues was most staunch. But the six years of Lord Beaconsfield's supremacy had left such memories that the most impatient Radical could not lightly break loose from the ties of party allegiance; and even when most distressed by the political situation, Dale was prepared to hope all things, and to endure much from leaders in whom he thoroughly believed.

It will be convenient to reserve Irish affairs for another chapter, and to deal here with other questions of public policy.

Throughout the struggle over Mr. Bradlaugh and the

[1] For Italy.

oath, Dale never wavered in his attitude. He held fast to two principles—that the House of Commons had no right to require constituencies to impose a religious test on candidates, or to reject on religious grounds their duly chosen representatives; and, further, that the Parliamentary oath is absolutely ineffective as a defence against atheism. Mr. Bradlaugh's exclusion he regarded as a crime—the more heinous as it was perpetrated in the sacred name of the Christian faith. Two letters written to Mr. Chamberlain at the crisis of the struggle show how deeply Dale was stirred by the gravity of the issue.

TO THE RIGHT HON. J. CHAMBERLAIN

21st June 1880.

The Irishmen are getting past endurance, and Northcote's action last week seemed to me disgraceful. Indeed the Tory tactics as a whole will contribute to destroy the possibility of Free Institutions, unless checked. Gorst and his crew are abusing "questions" just as much as the Irish people are abusing other forms of the House. And now you have the Bradlaugh imbroglio. It is not very often that I have any desire to be in the House, but I should like the chance of a speech this week—only I should want the genius and passion and sternness of a Jewish prophet to scathe the men who are using the most august elements of human life as the weapons of party passion and party revenge.

28th June 1880.

The report seems to be authoritative that you intend to commit the Government to Labouchere's resolution.[1] This seems rather out of harmony with the position taken by Gladstone and maintained by him with such consummate skill last week. The change in the circumstances of the case produced by Bradlaugh's subsequent proceedings may, of course, justify the new line. If you are sure of carrying the resolution—well; but if you fail—what then?

Some one last night said to me that defeat must be followed

[1] Labouchere's resolution: "That Mr. Bradlaugh be admitted to make an affirmation or declaration." Sir Hardinge Giffard's amendment to this resolution was carried by a vote of 275 to 230.

by resignation and dissolution. I can hardly imagine that you are contemplating this; but the bare possibility of it seems sufficiently grave to justify me in troubling you with a note. With your experience of the thorny nature of the Bible question among our own people in Birmingham, and with the remembrance of the strength of the pressure which compelled us to yield last November, you must know what a tremendous spectre we should have to fight if the Government actually went to the country on the Bradlaugh case. I cannot suppose you mean to do it, but the bare suggestion is alarming.

I should think you would carry the *general* resolution described in the *Times* this morning, but dissolution even on *that* would be obnoxious to the objection urged in this letter. It would be made to identify the Government with Bradlaugh.

In the course of the controversy he approached the question from more than one point of view. Addressing the "Eight Hundred" — the central committee of the Liberal Association—he discussed its political aspect: the invasion of the rights of the constituency by the imposition of a religious test not recognised by law. Against such an act, so arbitrary, so iniquitous, a Christian minister above all other men was bound to protest; for "every public act of injustice done in the name of religion, every private wrong, enormously aggravated the difficulty of that task to which the ministers of the Christian faith are committed."

He felt constrained to deal also with the higher and more sacred issues involved, and to discuss the question in its relation to religious faith. Reluctant as he was to allude in the pulpit to subjects of political debate, he had no choice. Mr. Bradlaugh's exclusion from the House of Commons had been justified on religious grounds. Many, if not all, of those who had voted against his admission had been led to do so by religious conviction. To expose misconceptions which seemed to him to imperil the reality and the power of faith was a duty imposed upon a loyal preacher of the gospel. But it is noteworthy how, while in arms, obedient to the voice of conscience, he lingers among those serene heights of Divine truth that rise above the dust and the turmoil of conflict; how he dwells upon

the dignity and the splendour with which human life is invested by faith in God, and upon the awful solemnity which that belief confers on moral obligation: it is with slow and unwilling feet that he descends at last to the battle in the plain.

In two sermons, on "Atheism and the House of Commons"[1] and "Oath or Affirmation,"[2] he examined the arguments alleged in support of the Parliamentary oath. His objection was twofold. In the first place, the oath tended both to obscure the essential difference between religious belief as an intellectual assent and as a living and controlling power, and to establish an unreal and pernicious kind of distinction between theoretical and practical atheism—between the denial of God with the lips and the denial of Him in the life. And further, the oath as now accepted afforded no guarantee of genuine faith or of sound morality; its only effect was to furnish occasion for blasphemous profanity. A few extracts will sufficiently show the movement and direction of his thought.

Atheism is of two kinds. There is practical Atheism, in which all the active powers of man refuse to acknowledge the supreme authority of God, though the fact of His existence is admitted by the intellect. There is theoretical Atheism, in which His existence is denied, and His authority is, therefore, disregarded. To those of us who desire to bring our thoughts into harmony with the thoughts of God, who wish to look at things as they are, and not as mere human custom may make them seem to be, I ask, whether there is any real and serious difference between the two?

There are great numbers of men who would resent the charge of Atheism. They believe in God—so far they do well. But where is the glory of their faith—where its power? How often do they hear its voice? What provinces of their life are under its command? It should be crowned, sceptred, enthroned. If the works which are the proof of its authority and strength are absent, James says that it is dead. Yes, the only difference between the practical and the speculative atheist is this: in the soul of the practical atheist the dead corpse of faith is

[1] 27th June 1880. [2] 29th April 1883.

still lying, placed perhaps in a costly and splendid sarcophagus of religious observance, clothed, as I have seen the bodies of dead men clothed, in vestments of honour—decorated with jewels—but dead, really dead. From the soul of the speculative atheist the corpse has been removed, and hardly a trace remains that it was ever there.

What is it that you fear? It is not an opinion. It is moral conduct which is uncontrolled by the authority of God; practical Atheism; an habitual disregard of the Divine laws; an habitual indifference to the Divine approval and the Divine anger. And against practical Atheism no oath can protect you. What the Apostle James thought of the moral and religious value of that bare acknowledgment of the Divine existence, to which some good men attribute such immense importance, appears in the text: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble." Under the fires of that superb and awful scorn, religious formalism should be utterly consumed.

The oath does not even require a belief in the God of Revelation. A belief in any God is enough. Pilate could have taken it, and so could Nero, and every Roman magistrate that commanded Christian confessors to be beheaded, to be flung to the lions, or to be crucified. . . . For Christian men to talk of such an oath as though it were in any sense a bulwark of the Christian Faith is the very delirium of fanaticism.

"No," say some, "we do not defend the oath because it is a protection of Christian Faith; but because it is a protection of morality. If a man does not believe in God he can have no conscience, and there is nothing to restrain him from the worst crimes." I will not interrupt the course of this discussion to examine the general proposition on which this argument rests; but simply ask whether any kind of belief in any kind of God is really a protection of morality. Caiaphas and Judas, Pilate and Nero—all of these, as I have said, could have taken the oath; what protection did their belief afford to their morals? For three hundred years you have had the oath to protect the morality of the House of Commons. Has the morality of the House been protected? Statesmen have taken the oath who have kept their majority by bribing members of the House itself. Members have taken the oath who have won their election by bribing their constituencies. Gamblers have taken the oath who have left the House at midnight to lose thousands of pounds in a gambling-hell. Drunkards have taken the oath who have come reeling into the House from their wine to take part in a division.

Adulterers have taken the oath; and the remembrance of the God whose name they have taken in vain, did nothing to prevent them from blasting the honour of women who were the victims of their sensuality, and ruining the peace of friendly homes. The oath a defence of morality! The Dublin assassins were bound together by an oath. It was under the sanction of an oath that they murdered Mr. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish. Protect the morals of the House by insisting on the oath! Who believes that the morals of the House for the last three centuries would have been worse if the oath had never existed? If the oath is intended to protect the morals of the House of Commons, it is time to try some other means.

To secure a legislature that should be Christian in reality and not only in name, the oath, and all oaths, were futile. They could breed nothing but formalism, the barren husk of faith, a faith in which even the devils could share. It was for the reality that he pleaded—that men should cease to confound the false with the true.

If we ask for faith at all it must be for faith of a real and energetic kind—the faith that roots the life of man in the life of God. . . . I know of no method of securing the morality of Parliament but one—secure the morality of the nation. I know of no method of securing the religious loyalty of Parliament but one—secure the religious loyalty of the people.

Like many other Liberal politicians, Dale was grievously distressed by the course of affairs in Egypt, and he thoroughly sympathised with Mr. Bright in his despondency when the untoward events that led to the bombardment of Alexandria compelled him to resign his place in the Ministry.[1] Mr. Bright, worn by continued depression, and looking forward with nervous alarm to his Rectorial Address at the University of Glasgow, wrote to him in the autumn, saying: "I advise you not to go down to Glasgow. The duty is one I wish I could escape. I am weary of public speaking, and my mind is almost a 'blank' when I try to imagine what is required of me." To this sad letter Dale replied as follows.

[1] 15th July 1882.

TO THE RIGHT HON. JOHN BRIGHT

28th November 1882.

After the life you have lived and the work you have done the weariness of which you speak is not surprising. The emotional and imaginative energies which have contributed so much to your unique power always, I imagine, leave men with a sense of depression and exhaustion after they have been so active as they have been in your case. Elijah in the wilderness, after his conflict with Ahab and the priests of Baal, was as weary of his work as I suppose you are. But he had done a great thing for God and his people. I wish that some of us could give you some impression of what we think and feel about the kind of service you have rendered to the country during the last thirty or forty years. You have sometimes bantered me about my militant instincts, but even when I have ventured to differ from you—as I did about the Crimean war, and as I have done about more recent questions—my sense of the moral value of your influence on the public life of the nation was, I think, as vivid as that of the people whose judgment went with your own. You have, I believe, inspired large numbers of men with the idea that political action should be guided and sustained neither by self-interest nor by ambition, but by loyalty to conscience. This idea is a fruitful one, and will yield its harvests long after your personal work is over; and so you will live in the lives of other men. What an admirable subject that would be for your Glasgow address—the responsibilities of a free people in relation to legislation and policy.

Forgive this long letter. But to hear that Elijah is weary touches the heart of one who saw him on Carmel.

In the Egyptian troubles, as he said in a letter to Mr. Chamberlain, Dale had shown himself "very loyal to the Government," and he strongly reprobated "the worrying tactics of the Opposition." But he could not agree with those who were content to express "confidence" in Mr. Gladstone and blindly to remit the questions at issue to the decision of the party leaders. To censure or to condemn without full and precise knowledge would have been unjust; but the essential facts were accessible to any one who would take the trouble to master them, and Dale was convinced that a little more boldness of speech

might have rendered real service both to the Ministry and the nation.

In relation to South African affairs he felt silence to be impossible. He had welcomed the policy initiated by the Convention of Pretoria,[1] conceding independence to the Transvaal, but imposing on the imperial Government responsibility for the protection of native races within and beyond the frontiers. In correspondence with Mr. Chamberlain, who on that subject was the mouthpiece of the Cabinet in the House of Commons, and in more than one public utterance, he expressed his satisfaction that the freedom of the Boers did not involve the slavery of the natives. At first the outlook was hopeful; but the Boers soon began to chafe against the restrictions to which they were subjected. They coveted the rich pastures of the neighbouring Bechuanas—among whom Robert Moffat had lived and laboured for half a century; they desired to secure control of the great trade-roads running through Bechuanaland between the Cape and Central Africa; they began to harass, to plunder, to terrorise. When the Rev. John Mackenzie visited England in the autumn of 1882, he brought a lamentable record of outrage and cruelty. He addressed several meetings in various parts of the country; and at Birmingham, Dale, who had been in communication with him for many months, made a strong appeal to the Government to discharge the duties it had undertaken. We had power to redress wrongs, and he contended that we were under solemn obligation to remedy the wrongs that had been brought to our knowledge. He particularly urged that the Government should insist on carrying out the 18th article of the Convention of Pretoria.

The speech attracted attention, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, then edited by Mr. John Morley, emphatically condemned the policy thus advocated; but Dale reasserted his contention.

[The policy of the Government] seemed to me both righteous and expedient, singularly courageous and singularly Christian.

[1] 21st March 1881.

But that policy included two distinct elements. It restored to the Boers internal independence; it reserved to the British Government powers for the protection of native races on the Transvaal frontier. It is not unreasonable for those who in the face of great obloquy[1] supported the Government in recognising the independence of the Transvaal, to ask that it should also use its treaty powers, and use them effectively, for the protection of the natives.

To this statement the *Pall Mall Gazette* replied that the suzerainty over the Transvaal retained by us was a "shadowy term," and that those who demanded that our reserved rights should be enforced, were bound to face the question whether they were willing to fight to enforce them. Was Dale ready to run the risk of a fresh war in South Africa? If not, his position, whatever might be said for it, was untenable in practice. To the assumption involved in this method of argument Dale demurred. The immediate question, he rejoined, was not whether we should fight the Transvaal Republic, but whether the British Government and the British people should regard with indifference the outrages of the Boers against tribes that we had undertaken to protect.

To assume that a firm attempt on our part to put a stop to these outrages would involve us in war with the Transvaal is to assume that men like Mr. Joubert approve of them. It is to assume that the demand of the Boers for independence really meant a demand for liberty to commit acts of plunder and violence beyond the borders of their own territory. Both these assumptions are unjust. We are bound to take it for granted that the Government of the Transvaal—if it is fully aware of the magnitude of the offences of which we complain—shares our condemnation of them. It may, however, have no sufficient resources for their suppression; in that case, it should be our endeavour to discover some means of securing an effective police on the Transvaal frontier, and we should do this in concert with the Transvaal Government. You describe the suzerainty as a "shadowy term"; but the powers reserved in article 18 for the protection of the native races are sufficiently definite and substantial. I have no desire to use these powers in a way that would irritate the sensitiveness of the Republic; but if the Govern-

[1] After the disaster at Majuba Hill.

ment of the Republic cannot prevent such crimes as are declared to have been committed in the Bechuana country, and if we are indifferent to them, we shall have the South African tribes in a blaze again before a few years are over, and for the safety of our colonists we shall be compelled to interfere.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* in reply declared its willingness to "remonstrate," but refused to "fire a single shot" if the remonstrance were ignored.

In the ensuing session, the ministerial policy was challenged in both Houses of Parliament, and in the Commons Mr. Forster indicted the Government for its impotence to hold the Transvaal Republic to its engagements. His attack provoked Mr. Gladstone to an outburst of rhetorical passion, rare even in him, and he ruthlessly denounced "the man of peace who was preaching war." But the reply, though effective for its purpose, was not of a kind to allay the misgivings of those who felt that we were receding from an imperial duty, and Dale appealed to Mr. Gladstone himself to dispel the doubts that had been thrown on the meaning and purpose of the Convention.

To the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone

14th April 1883.

Before the debate on the Transvaal is closed it would be a great relief to some of the most loyal supporters of the Government if one point were made quite clear. In the discussions on this subject which took place early in 1881, it was maintained with great emphasis that the policy of the Government provided (1) for the restoration of the independence of the Transvaal Republic under the suzerainty of the Queen, and (2) for the protection of the native races.

I remember very well the energy with which the second object was insisted upon in popular meetings of the Liberal party; and I think that the speakers who insisted on it had abundant authority for all they said, in the speeches of the most important members of the Ministry in the House of Commons.

But in the present debate the representatives of the Ministry have assumed—indeed expressly argued—that although the Pretoria Convention gives us power to interfere on behalf of the

native races, it does not impose any obligation to interfere, and that our obligations are limited to the fulfilment of certain promises made by British officials to some of the native chiefs.

This may be a perfectly legitimate interpretation of the terms of the Convention, but I venture to submit that it is not in harmony with the declarations of Ministers when the policy of the retrocession of the Transvaal was under discussion.

There is no doubt very much to be said in favour of abstaining from all interference between the Boers and the natives; but my difficulty is to reconcile this course with the arguments which assisted to reconcile the country to the restoration of Transvaal independence—arguments which rested on official assurances that the Ministry intended to protect the native races. If it had been said that powers to protect would be taken but not used, it is at least possible that a section of the party might have declined to approve the ministerial policy.

I am not so presumptuous as to venture to discuss with yourself the present position of the Ministry in relation to this question. I simply wish most respectfully to invite your attention to an aspect of the subject which occasions perplexity and, I might say, pain to some earnest friends of the Government.

I do not know what action has been taken by any of the missionary societies on the subject; but I wish to say very explicitly that the passage in Mr. Forster's speech in which he spoke of the claims that might be made on the Government if missionary property were destroyed by the Boers is in my judgment preposterous. The buildings which may perhaps be in peril were erected long before any kind of English guarantee was given that the Transvaal Boers should be prevented from injuring their neighbours. That Government should be asked to protect either the missionaries or their converts is also contrary to the principles of those with whom I am accustomed to act. The one point to which I venture to direct attention is the contrast, as it appears to me, between the declarations of Ministers in 1881 in relation to the native races generally and the position which has been taken in the present debate.

One more word of personal explanation. If in 1881 it had been proposed to restore independence to the Transvaal without making provision for protecting the natives, I should have supported the proposal as just; but in the controversies of that time I felt that whatever I said in support of the Government was immensely strengthened by the clearness, the decision, with which it was officially declared that the Government intended that the natives should be protected. This did not

mean that the Boers were to be asked to promise not to injure them.

Excuse me for writing at such length. I should be sorry that you should trouble to send me any private reply.

I am anxious that some representative of the Government should deal with this aspect of the question in the House of Commons.

Mr. Gladstone's reply was courteous but not reassuring. It dwelt almost entirely upon the difficulties of the situation, and said very little about the possibilities of their solution. Indeed the position of affairs elsewhere was becoming critical: our army, as Mr. Chamberlain reminded his friend, was far too small to meet any fresh demands on its strength; and the Boers were left to take their own course.

During the rest of the year attention was almost wholly engrossed by home politics. Ministers were pledged to extend the franchise in the counties, and, as a consequence, to a scheme of electoral redistribution. A London Government Bill was also in prospect. The two measures competed for priority. At a meeting held in London in May, the Liberal Federation asked for both but for "franchise first." Dale was one of those who supported the demand. In October he took the same line at the Leeds Conference, when the question was again discussed. He also wrote in the *Contemporary Review*, defending the decision of the delegates.[1]

He was as anxious as any one to see the authority of the London Vestries superseded by free municipal institutions; but he was conscious that outside London at any rate the difficulties involved in such a change had received very little serious consideration. Some of these problems he stated in a definite shape.

Is there to be one magnificent municipality for four millions of people? or is there to be a confederation of municipalities, with a representative board in charge of water, sewage, and other public works which must be under the superintendence of

[1] *Contemporary Review*, November 1883, pp. 759-768.

a central authority? If there is to be only one municipality, it is clear that the City Council will have almost the dignity of a Parliament: the rank of its leaders will approach the rank of Ministers of State; its officials will require salaries nearly equal to those which are received by the high authorities in Whitehall and Downing Street. The mechanism of its departments will be almost as complicated, and probably almost as hard to work, as the mechanism of the Education Department, the Home Office, or the Board of Trade. There will be the gravest danger of a new "Circumlocution Office," and the municipal activity of London will be likely to get entangled and restricted by the proverbial "red-tape." . . .

The question of the police is one which the Government may find it still harder to settle. The metropolitan police is an army. It seems to me very likely that the proposal to place it under municipal control would fill many excellent members on both sides of the House of Commons with dismay. They would argue that in the hands of authorities deriving their power directly from popular election the force might become dangerous to the State; that the protection of Parliament, of the Courts of Justice, and of the great Government offices cannot be safely transferred from a Minister of State responsible to Parliament and the Crown. On the other hand, it would be argued that to refuse to give the new municipal body the control of the police would be a violation of the principles of municipal government, would betray a shameful distrust of free and popular institutions, and would be almost certain to lead to irritating conflicts between two rival authorities.

He did not disguise the fact that the Conference had expressed itself in favour of the introduction of both Bills —the Franchise Bill and the London Government Bill— in the ensuing session; but he foresaw serious danger if any great measure were proposed before opinion in the country had taken shape, and especially before Liberal members of Parliament had been able to form a judgment on the principles that it embodied. Delay, in his opinion, would do less harm than premature and unconsidered legislation. In a letter to Mr. Bunting, the editor of the *Contemporary*, who had written, "I hope that you do not yourself feel distrust about the London municipality," Dale expressed more clearly the grounds of his hesitation and doubt.

To Mr. P. W. Bunting

29th October 1883.

I thought it right to put some of the difficulties of the London Bill into a concrete form, that people who have not thought of the subject might be led to think of it, and to recognise the difficulty of the problem. But I thought that by stating so clearly that the drift of opinion at the Conference went for a London Bill next session as well as a Franchise Bill I had done something for Firth and his friends. I suppose, but do not know, that Harcourt's Bill is for one municipality. If I were quite clear that this is the right thing—or the only possible thing—I should advise my friends to press the Government to bring it forward with whatever imperfections. Take the police question, for instance: London ought not to be satisfied without the control of its own police; but I would rather have a Bill reserving the control of the police to the Home Office than no Bill at all.

The Government may feel that they cannot bring forward a perfect Bill with any chance of passing it. Firth and his people should say, Then give us an imperfect one.

But on the question of one municipality I have doubts so grave that I am not at all clear that I should be prepared to vote for what I suppose to be Harcourt's scheme. I am in a state of suspense; and I think a great many good Liberals are in the same condition. I did not put the case against one municipality half as strongly as it might be put. My own impression is that it would create no real municipal life at all.

For the next two years Dale took very little part in public affairs. He had passed through great sorrows; his strength showed signs of breaking; he had neither vigour nor inclination for duties that were not imperative. A speech on the Franchise and another on Redistribution were his only political utterances during a period of eighteen months. But his silence was not due to indifference, and when the relations of Russia and Great Britain became menacing in 1884 and 1885, he watched the growing trouble with grave anxiety.

The point of danger, it will be remembered, was at Penjdeh, on the northern frontier of Afghanistan. A joint-commission to determine the disputed frontier-line

had been accepted both by Russia and ourselves, but Sir Peter Lumsden, the British Commissioner, awaited in vain the arrival of his Russian colleague. Meanwhile it was reported that the Russian outposts were being steadily pushed forward in violation of a distinct understanding; and on 8th April 1885, news reached London that the Afghan troops had been attacked and defeated on the Kushk River, and that the Russians had occupied Penjdeh on 30th March. Public excitement steadily increased: at the end of March it was decided to call out the Reserves; and on 21st April Mr. Gladstone asked for eleven millions on a vote of credit.

The whole of the London Press, with the sole exception of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, spoke with one voice. It was almost universally assumed that the case was one in which no doubt was possible, and that we stood on the verge of an inevitable war. But the representatives of Russia contended that Penjdeh was not in Afghan territory, and that it had never been so claimed until Afghan troops had been sent to occupy it in the previous June at a time when the question of the frontier had already been referred to the joint-commission; they contended also that the attack had been provoked by the aggressive movements of the Afghan troops in and around Penjdeh.

During the earlier stages of the crisis Dale was convinced that the case was one in which negotiation was both reasonable and possible. He was willing to fight, if compelled; but he was loath to fight in a hurry or under a misapprehension, and he saw with alarm that public opinion was dragging its anchors and beginning to drift out of control. He wrote to Mr. Chamberlain expressing his anxiety.

TO THE RIGHT HON. J. CHAMBERLAIN

27th March 1885.

I am very much obliged to you for the paper which I return.

I go very heartily with you on every point—on one point, indeed, I think I go beyond you. In 1879 it was the Radical opinion,

if I recall it aright, that the Suleiman range was the safe frontier for India, and that interference of any kind beyond it was likely to bring trouble. I am of the same opinion still.

What makes me anxious is this: nearly all the newspapers are vehemently denouncing Russia as wholly in the wrong in the matter of her advanced positions, and assuming that we are wholly in the right; and I am afraid, if silence continues on the side of those who think differently, that there will be a wild howl at the Government in the event of a peaceful settlement—or, rather, that the vehemence of passion will make it difficult for the Government to accept such a settlement. The Russian contention that the Afghans were the first to advance their outposts into the debated or debateable district is not, as far as I see, touched at all.

It is a very great satisfaction to me to know your own position. I hope you will hold fast to it.

He determined to appeal to his fellow-townsmen, and to the wider constituency beyond them that he could reach through the Press; and on the last Sunday in March he carefully reviewed the course of negotiations and events, pleading for calm inquiry before we committed ourselves to a great and terrible war. Even after the news of the attack on Penjdeh, he still held to his opinion that war might be averted by prudence and self-restraint, and he continued to encourage Mr. Chamberlain to maintain the resolute position which he had taken up.

The defeat of the Government and the return of the Conservatives to office followed at no great interval. The dissolution was announced in the autumn. But before the struggle at the polls began, Mr. Chamberlain addressed a series of meetings in various parts of the country, setting forth what was afterwards known as the "Unauthorised Programme." Dale wrote to congratulate him on his return from the campaign.

To the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain

21st September 1885.

I congratulate you very heartily on your recent speeches in the north; apart from the substance of them, which was admirable, the form—in which I include all the rhetorical elements—

reached a level which I think you never touched before, and which I hope you will keep. It is a great thing for a man to make an advance of this kind when he has touched fifty. This criticism is rather presumptuous for a person like myself to offer to an ex-Cabinet Minister; but the delight one has in watching the growing strength of one's comrades remains when a comrade has become a chief, and when one has lost the right to speak to him in this way.

When the elections began in November, Dale rallied his energies for the fray. The recent Act had divided Birmingham into seven constituencies, each returning a member; Aston, an outlying portion of the town, was treated as a separate borough. In some of the divisions the conflict was severe, especially in Central Birmingham, where Mr. Bright was opposed by Lord Randolph Churchill; and in North Birmingham, where Mr. Henry Matthews, afterwards the Conservative Home Secretary, stood against Mr. William Kenrick; in the Bordesley division, too, Mr. Henry Broadhurst, at that time a stranger to the town, had to fight a hard battle. Dale's help was given wherever it was most needed; he never spoke with greater effect than in this contest. It was the last occasion on which the Liberal party in Birmingham fought under the same flag; and at the banquet at the Reform Club on 17th December, over which he presided, held to celebrate an unbroken victory in Birmingham and in Aston, they met for the last time in their united strength.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE IRISH QUESTION

Ireland and the Liberal party—The supremacy of law—The Dublin murders —The Home Rule Bill of 1886—Feeling at Birmingham—Dale's criticism of the Bill—Letter to Mr. Gladstone—Irish members in the House of Commons: suggestion of a compromise—Letters to Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Morley—Article in the *Contemporary*—Correspondence with Archbishop Walsh—Attempts to keep the peace in Birmingham—Defends Mr. Chamberlain and the policy of the Liberal Unionists—Further efforts at reconciliation—Difficulties of reunion—Withdraws from the conflict—A political exile.

ALTHOUGH the part that Dale took in the controversy arising out of the Home Rule Bill was inconspicuous, it can hardly be described as unimportant; and the disruption of the Liberal party so modified the conditions of his public activity that it cannot be left unnoticed.

After Mr. Gladstone's return to office in 1880, Dale consistently supported the Irish policy of his government, both in Birmingham and at the meetings of the Liberal Federation. He recognised the existence of radical defects both in the method of Irish administration and in the system of Irish land tenure; he sympathised with the demand for large and comprehensive measures of reform; but he invariably insisted that at all costs the supremacy of the law must be maintained. Law, as he viewed it, was not a thing to be trifled with or to be made light of. Law in the natural world was the thought of God, revealed and made intelligible to man. Law in human society was man's attempt—however perverted by misconception and failure—to apply the thought of God to the circumstances and relations of human life; and he regarded with pro-

found misgiving any tendency by which its power was impaired or its authority impugned: a bad law, an unjust law, was a law to be mended or abolished; but so long as it continued, it was a law to be obeyed; disobedience was dangerous, and could be justified only in rare instances and by reasons of surpassing weight. In supporting those who upheld the law, he was governed not by instincts of party loyalty, but by deliberate moral conviction.

More than once, when sections of the Liberal party grew restive and threatened to revolt against any resort to coercive measures in Ireland, he withstood them. When the Government was denounced for using military force to defend the Irish police, he insisted that "the life of every officer of the law while discharging his duty ought to be as sacred as the life of any other man in the country," and that the administrative authority, if it shrank from using the whole strength at its command for the protection of its servants, would be guilty of a grave dereliction of duty. When the "unwritten law" of the Land League attempted to supersede the law of Parliament and of the Crown, the executive government, he held, was bound to suppress a rival and a revolutionary authority. Accepting the statements of Mr. Parnell and his colleagues that they deprecated outrage and deplored it, he saw in their avowal an additional reason for energetic and decisive action. The outrages which the League could not suppress could never be punished so long as the League existed as a rival authority with conflicting laws and conflicting tribunals. Political agitation was permissible; but as a revolutionary government the League must be crushed, and Parliament was bound to crush it.

He maintained this position at the meetings of the Liberal Federation held in January 1881, when the coercive measures of the Government were vigorously attacked. He reminded those who demanded priority for remedial legislation, that such measures take time to devise and to pass. Nor did he believe that remedial

measures alone would meet the necessities of the case, although he had no love for coercion.

> Coercion must be hateful to every genuine Liberal. It is an attempt to maintain the authority of law in other ways than those provided by the ordinary processes of the courts; and when this is done, there is danger of serious injustice. But we have coercion in Ireland already—we have it in a great part of Ireland. For months coercion has suspended the ordinary course of justice. Unlimited power, vested in unknown hands, is enforcing laws established by an unknown authority, and is enforcing them by illegal processes and arbitrary penalties. If I am to be under a government of coercion, I prefer a government which publicly accepts the responsibility of its acts, and which can be held responsible for them before the whole nation. What I most dread is a government of coercion which works in secret, and whose representatives disavow at Westminster the acts which are done in their name at least in Ireland.

At the same time, while asserting the necessity of vindicating the supremacy of the law, he consulted Mr. Bright as to the possibility of introducing into the Coercion Bill a clause suspending "eviction from agricultural holdings—or from agricultural holdings valued at less than £50 a year—till after next September," on the ground that "great trouble may happen between the breaking down of the Land League and the passing of the Land Bill." Again, in July, when the progress of the Land Bill was, as he thought, deliberately retarded by obstruction in the House of Commons, he protested with a vigour that undoubtedly placed him among those "imperious provincial politicians" marked out for solemn rebuke by the *Times*.

The assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke[1] profoundly stirred him. He heard the news only a few minutes before the service on Sunday morning, and when he entered the pulpit he was still overcome by agitation. His voice was "so changed by horror, indignation, and grief, as to be scarcely recognisable"; and it was only by a strong effort that he mastered himself

[1] 6th May 1882.

sufficiently to conduct the service. In announcing the tragedy to the congregation, he entreated them to distinguish between the desperate men who had committed the crime and the great mass of the Irish people whose brightest hopes it would darken and destroy, and to guard alike against panic and passion. But even in the presence of so monstrous a crime, he still maintained that remedial and coercive legislation must not be separated. This conviction he reasserted before the Liberal Association and in the Congregational Union, where he was called up by the assembly to support a resolution of condemnation and condolence. He accepted the Crimes Bill brought in by the Government, but he never ceased to plead for the legislative changes that should destroy the discontent by which crime was instigated and approved.

The Home Rule question, and the problems involved in it, Dale had already faced; he had discussed in detail the possibilities of a settlement during the summer of 1885, when Mr. Chamberlain's plan for establishing Provincial Councils in Ireland was under consideration. A measure of that kind seemed to him inadequate: no representative assembly other than a Parliament would satisfy the reasonable wishes of the Irish people; Mr. Chamberlain, he found, was not prepared to concede as much. But Mr. Gladstone's determination, after the elections of 1885, to force Home Rule to the front took him by surprise, and for many reasons he regretted so precipitate a decision. Especially he doubted the wisdom of attempting to deal with matters of such magnitude before the electors in the constituencies or their representatives in Parliament had threshed out the question in public discussion; legislation should be shaped by opinion, and public opinion as yet was incoherent and fluctuating.

For some time he refrained from any public utterance. It was not till 21st April 1886—nearly a fortnight after Mr. Gladstone brought in his Bill—that the Liberal party in Birmingham met to consider the proposals of the Government. Mr. Chamberlain was present, and explained to

"the Two Thousand" his reasons for resigning office. After his speech Mr. Schnadhorst, the President of the Association, proposed a vote of confidence, recognising "the honesty of purpose" and "the sense of personal honour and public duty" by which his action had been determined. Dale was then called upon to submit a resolution on the Irish question, in no sense hostile to the principle of the Home Rule Bill, but asserting the necessity of amendment in detail. The resolution was carefully framed: it expressed unbroken confidence in Mr. Gladstone as leader of the Liberal party, sympathy with his efforts to make a permanent settlement of the Irish question, approval of his proposal to entrust the people of Ireland with a large control over their affairs by means of a representative assembly; it recognised in the Bill the foundations of a satisfactory settlement; but at the same time, it asserted the necessity of safeguarding the integrity and the unity of the three kingdoms; and to this end it urged that Irish representatives should be retained at Westminster, thus ensuring imperial supremacy, and also upholding the principle that taxation and representation should go together; it expressed the hope that this and other amendments would be agreed to by the Government. In short, it accepted the foundation, but demurred to the plan of the fabric.

Before the resolution was proposed, an appeal was made for adjournment; it was already ten o'clock—too late for a full and free discussion. Dale was willing to adjourn the meeting at the request of a strong minority, and said so. It was not their custom to force a vote; and in the interests of peace he was anxious that all opinions should get a hearing. But Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Collings pressed for an immediate decision, and their vehemence prevailed.

Dale's speech closely followed the lines of the resolution. But in the forefront of his criticism he set the declaration that Mr. Gladstone's action and speech had permanently and radically affected the state of affairs. The Prime Minister's decision in favour of Home Rule

was "one of those great events which change the course of national history." His proposal to establish a legislature in Dublin compelled them to start from that point, and from no other. Any plan that might be adopted must begin there. But he claimed the right to apply an unfettered judgment to the methods and provisions of the Bill; and to justify himself he quoted Burke's words: "In my course I have known, and according to my measure have co-operated with great men, and I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by the observations of those who were much inferior in understanding to the person who took the lead in the business." He spoke for himself, but he also had in his mind what had occurred within the Cabinet; for he felt that a fuller discussion of the Bill while in the process of drafting, and a larger co-operation in framing it, would have gone far to narrow the range of dispute and to lessen the risk of open rupture.

He protested against the exclusion of the Irish members from the imperial Parliament, as hostile to constitutional freedom and as perilous to the integrity of the empire. Other flaws might be serious: that, in his view, was fatal. Had such a proposal come from a Tory statesman, its injustice would have been denounced on every Liberal platform in the country.

The proposal is not less unconstitutional, it is not less unjust, because by some accident it has come from a Liberal statesman, than it would have been if it had come from the leader of the Tory party. Scotland would not stand it. Ireland will not stand it. We all know that the Irish movement derives something of its inspiration and much of its support from America. How was it that we lost the American colonies? What was it that provoked the American war? The Ministry of Lord North insisted on levying customs duties on goods imported into American colonies, although the American colonies were not represented in the imperial Parliament, and in 1773 the people of Boston rather than pay the duty flung the cargoes of several tea-ships into Boston Harbour. Taxation and representation, they said, must go together, and every man in England that was true to constitutional principles applauded

their act. Three years after, in 1776, the English were driven out of Boston. In 1783 we had to acknowledge American independence. Those great events are not forgotten in America. They are celebrated every year in every part of the American Union. Let this Bill pass as it stands, and then at the next celebration of American independence every Irish orator in America will declare, and will declare truly, that Mr. Gladstone's Ministry is following the policy of the Ministry of Lord North. Ireland will soon catch fire. We shall have the same resistance that was offered in America followed by the same result, and rather than yield after protracted war I would prefer to give independence at once. It is said that the Irish people do not want to be represented in the imperial Parliament. No, and they do not want to pay for imperial purposes. Nothing would suit them better than to exclude their representatives from Westminster. Make up your minds, take your choice. You may release, if you like, the Irish people from all taxation for imperial purposes, and then you may dismiss their representatives from Westminster. If you intend to insist that they should bear their share of maintaining the imperial army and navy, and their share of meeting the annual charges of the National Debt, then you must give them a representation in the assembly by which these taxes are levied and by which they are administered. The Irish members say they are willing to surrender their places in the imperial Parliament, but the Irish members of Parliament have no constitutional right to transfer the power to tax the people of Ireland to an assembly in which Ireland is not represented. They have no authority to consent to the permanent degradation of their country.[1]

It was unreasonable, he admitted, that Irish members, after voting on Irish Bills at Dublin, should then come and vote on English and Scotch Bills at Westminster; he did not believe that such an arrangement could be permanent. But he was content to do one thing at a time; to begin with the establishment of an Irish Parliament, and then to determine its relations to the imperial legislature. National constitutions are not struck out in a hurry; they are not made—they grow. He was willing to leave much to the future.

With one other matter he was bound to deal. Mr. Chamberlain's withdrawal from the Ministry had been

[1] The *Times*, 22nd April 1886.

represented by some of his opponents as a bid—or a blow—for the leadership; already he had been proscribed and outlawed as a rival chief. Against such a temper, and against the disposition to consider persons instead of principles, Dale earnestly protested.

> This great subject should not be treated as if it were a question whether we should follow the leadership of Mr. Chamberlain or of Mr. Gladstone. We need them both. . . . The Liberal party had a right to demand his (Mr. Chamberlain's) judgment at such a time as this—his frank and honest judgment. He has given it. He would have been a traitor to us, a traitor to his chief, a traitor to his country, if he had not given it frankly. But the question of leadership is not raised. Mr. Gladstone is leader of the party.[1]

Dale's speech was intended to make for peace; and it was so regarded. Mr. Gladstone at once wrote to thank him for "the masterly manner in which you have confronted a most difficult situation," adding, "it is only by a temper like yours, conjoined with ability (which in such a case cannot of itself suffice, whatever its amount), that the Irish question can be satisfactorily dealt with." Dale replied as follows:—

To the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone

26th April 1886.

Accept my hearty thanks for your generous letter. I am deeply sensible of the honour of receiving a letter from you when there is so much to occupy your time and strength.

I wonder whether it would be very presumptuous for me to state in a few sentences the grounds on which I think it desirable to keep the Irish members—or some of them—at Westminster. The only apology I can offer for troubling you is, that I do not remember to have seen some of them set out with any explicitness.

1. The first and most obvious is that which has been insisted on again and again—that in the absence of Irish members from the imperial Parliament the subsidy will soon be repudiated. Mr. Parnell cannot bind the Irish people any more than Jefferson—

[1] The *Times*, 22nd April 1886.

had he for considerations of expediency consented to the tea-duty—could have bound Massachusetts and Virginia.

2. By retaining them you secure what seems to me the only effective veto on the acts of the Irish Parliament.

If the veto is to be exercised by the Crown on the advice of the Irish Ministry it is worthless; if it is to be exercised on the advice of the imperial Ministry its exercise should be subject to the ordinary responsibilities of Ministers to Parliament—apart from this the veto will be a broken reed; but if Ministers are to be responsible to the Parliament at Westminster for placing a veto on Irish measures the Irish members should be there to state their case.

The only Irish measures which I would have submitted to the imperial Parliament are the measures which have been vetoed. These should be laid on the table for the veto to be challenged. Irish members could not complain of this; it would give them a second chance.

3. By retaining them, more flexibility might be given to the general financial settlement, and there would be power to increase Irish taxation with the increase of imperial charges.

4. Some of the strongest objections to any measure for buying the land would be diminished, and the necessity for pressing the Land Bill through this session would be lessened, if it did not disappear.

5. With the Irish members at Westminster it might be possible to strengthen the hold of the Crown on the Executive; and—

6. The "two orders" might disappear—I venture to think they are certain to disappear within a very few years—without any peril to the minority.

I need not say how great a grief it is to me that Mr. Chamberlain should have been bound in honour—as I think he was—to leave your Ministry at such a time as this. I have worked with him for eighteen years, and though, of course, I have seen less of him since he became a Minister, our relations, which have often been extremely intimate, have been maintained. As the result of his temperament, education, and environment—all so different from your own—he was certain to approach nearly every political question with different assumptions and in a different spirit, and to deal with them in a different method. But I know that when he entered the Ministry he was drawn to you very strongly, and it seems to me a calamity that his future political life should miss the benefit it would derive from continued work under your leadership. As yet I have had no talk with him since the rupture, except for a few moments on the platform of the Town Hall last Wednesday—indeed, apart from a

business letter, I do not think we have exchanged thoughts since the beginning of December. But from my long knowledge of him I can hardly believe that he is irreconcilable.

Pray forgive this long letter. I am a Puritan, but understand what Easter is to a Churchman, and trust it has come to you with great joy and glory.

Mr. Gladstone's answer, in which he dwelt upon the conflicting difficulties of the question, did not suggest any possibility of concession on this point. Meanwhile every day increased the tension and the bitterness of feeling; the prospects of reconciliation were fading; if any terms could still be made, they must be made at once. So, as a last resource, on 6th May, Dale wrote to Mr. Morley, suggesting that the retention or exclusion of Irish representatives should be deferred for consideration until the Irish legislature met for its first session; a joint-committee of the House of Lords and the House of Commons and a committee of the Irish legislature should then confer on the question whether representatives of Irish constituencies should continue to sit in the imperial Parliament for the consideration of the subjects reserved from the control of the Irish legislature by the third and fourth clauses of the Bill; if they reported in favour of continuing Irish representation, they were to suggest also how many representatives there should be, and in what way they should be elected. He submitted a rough draft of a clause to give effect to the proposal.

The suggestion was favourably received, and its merits were acknowledged. But it was insisted that clause 24[1] of the Bill should still be retained—a condition by which the efficacy of the plan as a means of compromise was wholly destroyed.

To the Right Hon. John Morley

9th May 1886.

Your letter shattered my hopes. To retain clause 24 and add something like the suggestion I ventured to make, would leave us

[1] Excluding Irish representative peers from the House of Lords and Irish members from the House of Commons.

just where we are. It would be to ask men to vote for exclusion on condition that the question of exclusion should be reconsidered. If the clause were replaced by the suggestion the whole subject of exclusion would be postponed.

TO THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE

9th May 1886.

In letters from Mr. John Morley which reached me this morning he says that you have thought favourably of a suggestion which I ventured to make to him, that the question of retaining the Irish members at Westminster should be postponed till the first meetings of the Irish legislature, but he adds that "of course" clause 24 would be retained.

Will you allow me to point out that in that case the whole value of the suggestion would be cancelled. If the excluding clause is retained, with the addition of what Mr. Morley describes as a "proviso" that the whole question shall be considered at some future time, voting for the second reading will mean agreeing to the exclusion on condition of a promise that the question shall be reopened. Now I thought—indeed knew—that you wished the second reading to be taken on the simple question of Home Rule—postponing all consideration of the exclusion of the Irish members; and it was to render such a vote possible that I was presumptuous enough to offer my suggestion.

Even if some such suggestion as this were embodied in the Bill, Mr. Chamberlain's friends might say, "We object to being required to declare that the retention of the Irish members is an open question"; but I thought it possible that rather than imperil the Bill they would come that distance to meet you.

I am writing after rather an exhausting service; pray forgive me if I have written in too pertinacious a tone. Earnestly hoping that in the course of the week it will become apparent that a solution has been discovered that will secure the reconciliation and support of many who are now anxious to vote for the second reading but unable to see their way, I am, etc.

In the *Contemporary Review* for June he rehearsed the grounds of his hostility to clause 24. One section of the article raised a new point. Mr. Gladstone had repeatedly declared his inability, in the event of Irish members being retained at Westminster, to draw a distinction between imperial concerns and others: "I believe it passes the wit of man," he had said in a famous phrase. Dale

pointed out that what Mr. Gladstone despaired of doing he had done already. The third section of his Bill defined the matters withheld from the control of the Irish legislature; these might be described as imperial concerns reserved for the consideration of the imperial Parliament. Why, he asked, should not the same method be followed in the case of Great Britain, by the creation of a British legislature under an Act with a section identical in its terms with the third section of the Irish Bill? Or, if Scotland desired it, Scotland too might have a legislature of its own. Such an arrangement would effectively secure national control over national affairs, while the imperial Parliament, representing the three kingdoms, would remain supreme in matters of imperial policy. The plan, if adopted, would not only lighten the intolerable burden now thrown upon a single legislature, but would secure the course of imperial politics against disturbance by cross-currents of alien and often subordinate interests. The proposal was practically one for Home Rule all round. But he did not propose to defer legislation until the three kingdoms were ready to accept such a plan simultaneously. He wished to begin with Ireland—and to begin at once. This was an essential part of his scheme—that Ireland should not be held back and kept waiting. Delay, he felt, must endanger the chances of a satisfactory settlement; for Mr. Gladstone's policy had made immediate action imperative.

In England this portion of the article passed almost unnoticed, but in Ireland Dr. Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, drew attention to it in an interview given to a representative of the *New York Tribune*.[1] He described the plan as "containing within it practically all the elements of a thoroughly satisfactory, because complete and final, settlement of the whole question," and added that so far he had found "a marvellously strong concurrence of opinion favourable to its proposals" on the part of those to whom he had spoken. The following

[1] The interview was simultaneously published in the Dublin *Freeman's Journal*, 16th August 1886.

letters on the subject passed between Dale and the Archbishop.

TO THE MOST REVEREND DR. WALSH, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

19th August 1886.

Allow me to thank your Grace for the copies of the *Freeman's Journal* which I found on my table this afternoon on returning home after a fortnight's absence in Derbyshire. I need not say that I was very much interested and gratified by your Grace's approval of the general lines of the article of mine which appeared in the June *Contemporary*. Cardinal Manning, three months ago, expressed his hearty concurrence with a speech I delivered to the "Liberal Two Thousand" on the occasion of Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Birmingham in the week before Easter, in which I maintained the same general position, though necessarily with less of detailed explanation. Your Grace is, however, under a misconception when you suggest, according to the report of the interviewer, that the Unionist opposition to Mr. Gladstone on account of the exclusion of the Irish representatives from Westminster was a mere pretence. I cannot speak, indeed, for the Hartington section; but there were many of us who would have cordially supported Mr. Gladstone, had he been able, with his views of the true method of settlement, to retain the Irish members in the imperial Parliament. But Mr. Gladstone's principle was wholly inconsistent with any such concession. In order that Ireland might receive that limited control over her own affairs which was provided for in his Bill, he insisted that she should be reduced to the position of a subordinate and tributary State. The exclusion of the Irish representatives from all share in imperial concerns was an essential element in his scheme. This seemed to me and to many others an impossible policy. Separation is perhaps possible—though I doubt it; but the tributary relationship between Ireland and England is wholly impossible. Had Mr. Parnell resented this humiliation he would have had the support of many English Radicals who have been driven into a position of hostility both to him and to Mr. Gladstone. Whether the time has come for undoing the mischief which has been occasioned by this mistake I cannot tell. During the last few weeks I have had very little opportunity for discussing the subject with my political friends. When the Bill was before the House, my old friend and comrade Mr. Chamberlain was prepared, had the Irish members been retained, to vote for the second reading, although he preferred a scheme

of Provincial Councils, which would in my judgment have developed very soon into a central legislature in Dublin. I believe, though I have had no communication with him since the dissolution, that he has now fallen back on the scheme which he preferred.

I regret that Mr. Gladstone's friends still insist that the solution is to be found on Mr. Gladstone's lines. Clearly if Ireland is to be a mere tributary State, such a scheme as that which is sketched in the June *Contemporary* is wholly dismissed. I imagine that the chief difficulty which would be felt by English Radicals in relation to the *Contemporary* proposals would relate to the control of the police and the administration of criminal justice. I have hardly ever discussed the general subject with a Radical without securing adhesion to the lines of the *Contemporary* article; but could there be any means discovered for substantially satisfying the demands of Mr. Parnell and his friends and yet removing the honest difficulties which are felt about the firmness and vigour of an independent Irish executive? The mischief of having an irresponsible executive was shown in Grattan's Parliament, but there are many persons who are disposed to grant a large measure of legislative independence to Ireland who yet shrink from entrusting the whole criminal administration and the police to an Irish legislature. I believe that terms might be arranged that would substantially satisfy both parties if they were disposed to meet each other fairly and to care more for the substance than for the form of the matter in dispute. But that is a large question which I will not presume to discuss in a letter. Your Grace's influence with the people of Ireland encourages me to call your attention to this point, which is one of great importance. Mr. Morley in one of his speeches during the election said that there were districts in Ireland to which he would not entrust the control of their own police. No doubt he expressed his belief that a central authority might be firm and just although local authorities were open to suspicion; but the statement was a very significant one from such a man.

I trust that your Grace will accept my apologies for venturing to write so long a letter.

FROM THE MOST REVEREND DR. WALSH, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

4 RUTLAND SQUARE, E.,
DUBLIN, 21*st August* 1886.

I have just received and most carefully read your letter. In speaking of the Unionist opponents of Mr. Gladstone's scheme,

I really did not think of referring to you or to those who share your views.

At all events, if you, and such as you, are to be classed among the "opponents," I can only say that nothing but the worst of bad management can have led to the shipwreck of the scheme and the present deplorable disruption of the Liberal party.

Now that I have spoken out, from the Irish side, would it be well to get some one of influence to endorse your plan, as publicly as I have done, out of the "Unionist" ranks? Possibly, if this were done, Mr. Gladstone might be moved to take it up. It seems clear to me, notwithstanding all I hear of the depth and force of the so-called "Conservative" reaction, that the present state of things in Parliament cannot last long. Indeed, if I am not much mistaken, Mr. T. P. O'Connor in his speech of last night has gone a great way towards breaking it up.

A policy of paying the Irish landlords, out of the public funds, the excess of their rents over what is fair and just, is not likely to find much favour in the present Parliament.

The *Freeman's Journal* is about to publish my interview as an extra. I will send you a few copies. You may be able to make use of them in some way towards bringing about a more conciliatory state of feeling. I should say that the views expressed on every point throughout, from first to last, are merely my own. But it would surprise you if I could give you the names of those who have, since the publication of this interview, expressed a full concurrence in them.

Are you quite sure that the steadfastness with which Mr. Gladstone's supporters insist upon maintaining the lines of his Bill really implies anything contrary to the acceptance of your scheme? I don't know any one who has more stoutly insisted upon the general lines of the Bill being maintained than I myself have done in this very interview. Yet I may say to you that one of my main objects in giving the interview was that I might direct public attention to your scheme. I think what Mr. Gladstone's supporters mean—certainly what I mean—is that we must have for Ireland a statutory Parliament, independent in the sense at least in which Mr. Gladstone's statutory Parliament would have been independent. So far as I can see, your scheme gives us this and more.

Of course we all see that a statutory Parliament is necessarily dependent in a constitutional sense. Mr. Bryce brought this out well in his speech on the second reading.

If I am not mistaken, the prevailing opinion of our Irish Home Rulers, as it certainly is mine, is that Mr. Chamberlain

insists on making us dependent in a very different sense—so that the intervention of the Westminster Parliament (including, presumably, the House of Lords?) would be necessary to give legislative effect to the acts of our Irish body, or, at all events, so that the legislation of that body would be practically open to review and irritating interference, the right of which would be reserved to Westminster, and for the exercise of which we should be prepared in every case of importance.

It would be far better to leave us as we are than to set up a new grievance of such magnitude as this.

It is hard to know how long we shall have to wait for the undoing of the mischief that has so sadly been wrought.

I had strong hopes that the recent election in Birmingham would have opened a door for a reuniting of the Liberal party on the lines of your scheme. But that chance was lost. The great want now seems to be that of a few mediators who could and would speak freely to leading men at both sides. It is so in our Irish land question. It is so perhaps much more in the greater question of the government of Ireland.

I trust you will lose no opportunity of exercising your great influence in the interests of peace and goodwill.

These efforts, however, led to nothing. The event proved, as might have been anticipated, that no great movement in politics can be brought about from outside. To effect a compromise between conflicting interests, or to secure the adoption of an important scheme, a man must either be in Parliament, or must stand in such close and intimate relations to the men who are a power in Parliamentary life, that he can speak through them and act through them. He must be able to press his schemes, to negotiate, to watch the moment for action and to seize it. Dale could do none of these things. It is not strange that he did not succeed; the wonder is that a man in his position should have got even a hearing in the turmoil and confusion of the fray.

In Birmingham, though feeling ran high, the peace had not yet been broken. The two sections of the Liberal party had not met in arms; and Dale exerted himself, both in private and in public, to avert a rupture. Before the elections in July 1886 he endeavoured to effect an arrangement for the return of the seven Liberal members

already in possession, irrespective of their opinions on the Irish question. He spoke in support of Mr. Cook, the ministerial candidate in one of the divisions of the borough. If Mr. Broadhurst had been willing to defend his seat for Bordesley, he would have helped him too; but Mr. Broadhurst's withdrawal was the beginning of open strife. The final crash soon came, and the Liberal party broke up in Birmingham as elsewhere beyond all hope of reunion. Dale found himself almost alone. He could not remain an active member of the Liberal Association after it had declared its adherence to Mr. Gladstone's policy, nor could he bring himself then or subsequently to join any Unionist organisation. He stood apart from either camp. The following letters written during the summer lay bare his mind.

To the Rev. J. P. Perkins

10th June 1886.

How is it that Mr. Chamberlain is the object of so much bitterness? Lord Hartington and Mr. Bright are just as responsible as he is for throwing out the Bill. On what grounds can the justice of the assaults on Mr. Chamberlain be defended? He is loyally carrying out the principles on this question which he advocated at Warrington last year, and for his avowal of which he received the enthusiastic approbation of the whole Liberal party. He may be mistaken, as other men have been; but he stands by the faith which he has professed, and has made the heaviest personal sacrifices in doing so. Had he remained in the Ministry after Lord Hartington refused to join it he would have been heir-apparent to the leadership of the Commons.

To the Rev. W. Hewgill

16th June 1886.

I am very much obliged to you for your friendly letter—one of a very large number that I have received during the last few weeks on the same subject.

To what extent people have supposed that my view of the Irish question is shared by the Congregational ministers of the country it is, of course, impossible for me to say. I made a speech on the subject in the Town Hall at a time when conciliation was possible, and the speech was received as a conciliatory one. I recognised Mr. Gladstone as the leader of the party—

indeed I insisted on this with strong emphasis—and maintained that whatever might have been the preferences of any Liberals for some other method of Home Rule the action of Mr. Gladstone had changed the whole condition of the problem, and that we ought to attempt to find a solution on the lines of the Government Bill. But I said nothing to imply that I was speaking for any one but myself. The only other public statement I have made is in the *Contemporary Review* for the present month. My dear friend and comrade Mr. Rogers describes his article in the *Nineteenth Century* as a Nonconformist view of the controversy. I do not complain; he has a perfect right so to describe it; but I make no pretension to any representative character.

The speech and the article contain all that I have addressed to the public on the question.

In private I have done my best to secure concessions that might have rendered it possible for the Government to go on till next autumn and then to produce a reconstructed Bill. It is curious to me to read what you say about all the concessions having been made on one side. Practically that seems to me to be true; only you are mistaken as to the side that was disposed to make concessions.

Mr. Chamberlain's own settled convictions have been long familiar to me; we discussed them together at a time when they were regarded as perilously rash by members of the present Cabinet. But I always told him that his proposals were inadequate, and that a Body in Dublin with powers that would justify the name of a Parliament was a necessary element in any final solution of the difficulty; but his position was a very strong one. When Mr. Gladstone's Bill was brought forward he recognised the gravity of the new conditions of the case and was willing to accept the Dublin legislature on condition that the Irish members were retained at Westminster and that the Bill received the modifications which were necessarily involved in their retention. This concession on his part was a very heavy one. It was not met frankly by the Cabinet. By piecemeal and with obvious reluctance one proposal after another was made that had the appearance of conceding what he asked for, but the substantial thing was never promised. I thought that it was possible to accept the terms offered at the Foreign Office; but these were explained away the next night, and things were worse than ever. He has now gone back very much to his old position; the difference between a Dublin Parliament and what he proposes in his manifesto measures the concession that he made to the Government.

The bitterness with which Mr. Chamberlain is assailed is, in my judgment, wholly unjustifiable. He has held fast to the principles he has advocated for years, and which when he advocated them last summer were enthusiastically applauded by his present assailants. He was willing to make a large concession to the Government in order to make it possible to solve the question without splitting the party. He has made a heavy sacrifice rather than consent to a measure which he thinks would be mischievous both to Ireland and England; he knew—or at any rate had a right to believe—that after Lord Hartington's secession he was heir-apparent to the leadership in the House of Commons if he remained with Mr. Gladstone. His opinion about the results of his action has been that for several years it will leave him under the shadow of general unpopularity. It is rather dangerous political morality to suggest that a man is playing for his own hand, when in harmony with his avowed convictions he feels obliged to separate himself from his party at such a cost as this.

As to what you say about the general opinion of Congregational ministers in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire I am not surprised; but be very sure of this, that in Mr. Chamberlain's judgment the question is too grave for his action to be affected by facts of that kind, much as he may regret them. Nor is he likely to consider very carefully whether he has permanently lost Nonconformist support. As he is the only statesman of first rank to whom we can look for disestablishment, I should regret very deeply any permanent severance between him and us. The severance may drive him into closer relations with sections of the Radical party with which on many grounds we have little sympathy, and this would be a calamity. But things must take their course.

And yet as this is not a strictly Nonconformist question I wonder at what you say. On a subject upon which Mr. Bright and Mr. Trevelyan, to say nothing of Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen and Sir Henry James, differ from Mr. Gladstone it is hard to understand why Mr. Chamberlain, because he also differs, should have been supposed to commit the unpardonable sin. I have written much more than I meant to write. Excuse me.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

8th July 1886.

It is a melancholy business—I mean the Election—and the break-up of the Liberal party. Morning after morning I have thought of you as the returns came in, and I have imagined how

keenly you would feel Mr. Gladstone's defeat. I, too, am deeply sorry for him, though I think that his success, considering the form in which he has put the issue before the country, would have been a national calamity too great to be measured. I have not been able to congratulate any of my friends who have fought and won, or to express my sympathy with those who have fought and lost. I have had no heart for it.

As to the coalescence of the Unionist Radicals with the Tories I cannot see very well what else was possible after Mr. Gladstone had chosen to make the election turn on one question—"If I had twenty votes I would give all the twenty against the man who votes against Ireland and our Irish policy." No matter what may have been the services which a man has rendered to Liberalism — no matter what the services he is capable of rendering to Liberalism—the support of the Irish policy of the Government is a question which is not only to dominate but to suppress all other considerations. I do not say that with his view of the immense importance of his Irish policy he is wrong; but if his view of its importance is right, then it justifies those Unionists who follow his example and disregard the difference between Toryism and Liberalism in order to defeat it. By his own account it is a question which suppresses party differences. The leader of the Liberal party has himself declared that the difference between Liberal and Tory is as nothing compared with the difference between a Liberal Dissentient and himself.

How long ago is it that Mr. Gladstone and his friends would have been as fiercely indignant at the charge of a coalescence between themselves and the Parnellites as they are now at the coalescence—not to carry a measure but to defeat it—between the Unionists and the Tories? "The Tories," said Sir William Harcourt last December, "propose to govern the country by an intimate alliance with men who openly avow their object is the dismemberment of Ireland from England. Is it possible that the country is going to tolerate such a transaction?" Sir William Harcourt was right. The country would not have tolerated it. Nor is it disposed to tolerate the sudden determination of the Liberals to attempt the same thing. Whatever the crimes of the Tories may be, they cannot be compared with the crimes attributed by Mr. Gladstone to the men with whom he has coalesced to defeat, wherever he could, the members of his own party.

Again, I say, I do not insist that he is in the wrong. The exigencies of the country may, in his judgment, leave him no choice. But when he would coalesce with Healy, Biggar, and

the rest to defeat a Unionist it is a little hard to see the crime of those who coalesce with Tories to defeat a man whom they regard as a Separatist.

My own view of the whole question led me to regard it as not sufficiently mature to make it one of war to the knife on either side. The only contest in which I have spoken was in East Birmingham on behalf of a ministerialist. While stating that my own objections to the Bills were undiminished I earnestly argued with Dissentient Liberals to support the ministerialist candidate. But I have seen no disposition outside Birmingham to exercise any tolerance towards those who hold different judgments on the question, and even here, through Broadhurst's unfortunate decision to stand for Nottingham, the fires were kindled in two of our divisions. Had he remained we should have carried him, though the ministerialist candidate for his division polled only 1040 votes, of which I suppose at least 500 were Irish; and Cook would have been carried too

Apart even from the Irish question the issue has been put by Mr. Gladstone in a way that would have made his success, in my judgment, a political disaster. We are asked to believe that the Bills of last Session are dead; what the Bills of next Session are to be we are not told. The Liberal party has been asked to give Mr. Gladstone a majority in favour of his Irish policy, though his Irish policy is undisclosed. It is a personal plebiscite, and a personal plebiscite when a question of supreme importance has to be determined. I hope the country will never give a blank cheque to any statesman.

But I am living, and have been living, throughout the Election "detached" from the strife. I did the best I could to form a judgment on the subject: I have read everything that has been said by the leaders, and my judgment remains what it was. I said my say early, and have said very little since, except in the interest of the Liberal party which to the leaders of every section of the party seems for the time to be a matter of no importance. I have been getting quietly on with work which has led me far away from the confusion and the bitterness, nor do I see that by active intervention I could have prevented any evil or secured any good. It looks now as if the Conservatives would have a majority over the Liberals—barring the Parnellites. The agricultural labourers were won by "the three acres and a cow," of which Mr. Gladstone now speaks with some scorn: for the present the men that did most to win them are in revolt; it remains to be seen whether they will stick by their present members. If they do, the Liberal catastrophe will be arrested short of utter ruin.

10th July 1886.

One word—and only one—for I am in the middle of a sermon. You say that Mr. Gladstone did not call on his friends to support Tories; but in the only case in which he had a chance of doing it he did it. He supported Sir Robert Peel against Finlay; and I suppose that no one is charitable enough to think that Sir Robert is a Liberal in any honest sense of the word.

And but for the restraint the Tories put on themselves—whether from patriotism or policy—Mr. Gladstone's advice would have returned many Tories in the place of members of his own party. If, where a Gladstonian Liberal was opposing a Unionist Liberal, the Tories had everywhere run a candidate, many a seat now held by a Unionist Liberal might through the division of the party have fallen to them. Mr. Gladstone narrowed the issue to one question—confidence in a policy which, if it was not disclosed in the Irish Bills, is undisclosed. Liberalism was to give place to this. And what is to be said for his allowing Hartington's seat to be contested? He could have stopped it if he had tried. He has proclaimed war to the knife with every Liberal that does not agree with him.

Privately he continued his efforts to bring about a better understanding, and in December he attempted to open a way of approach between Mr. Chamberlain and the Liberal leaders. For a time there seemed to be some hope of success. Sir William Harcourt's statement, in replying to a toast proposed by Dale at the dinner given in London to Mr. Schnadhorst on 9th March 1887—that the matters on which the representatives of the two sections agreed were many and great, while the matters on which they differed were small and few—was distinctly encouraging, even though it was already clear that the negotiations of the Round Table Conference would not issue in an immediate peace. In the June number of the *Contemporary Review*, exactly twelve months after the appearance of his former article, Dale carefully examined the relative extent of concurrence and dissension with a view to a settlement; ultimate reunion between the divided elements of the Liberal party he still regarded as certain. Mr. Gladstone's speech at Swansea on 4th June was interpreted by some

—the editor of the *Contemporary* among them—as a more distinct sign of willingness to satisfy the demands of the Liberal Unionists than he had hitherto shown; and Mr. Bunting very reasonably urged that Dale and his friends ought to be satisfied with "concession," and should not demand "conversion." To this appeal Dale replied in two letters.

To Mr. P. W. Bunting

18th June 1887.

Had Mr. Gladstone's speech at Swansea on 4th June 1887 been delivered in the House of Commons on 6th June 1886 it would have saved the Bill and averted the split. About its effect now I am doubtful; I mean its effect on the Radical Unionists. In the first place, it came after Mr. Morley's speech at Norwich and Mr. Gladstone's letter to one of the electors of West Birmingham; the speech and the letter seemed to me to close the door against us; and it will not be easy—for those who had received so shortly before the Swansea speech what seemed to be a final dismissal—to assure themselves that if they return to the majority of the party they will be safe. You will not suppose that I mean to attribute to the Radical Unionists any ungenerous suspicion of Mr. Gladstone's good faith; but I think that you can understand the condition of perplexity created by (*a*) the concession in the Haslam correspondence in the winter; (*b*) what seemed the peremptory refusal of concession in the letter to the West Birmingham elector about a month ago, after my paper in the *Contemporary* was dismissed; (*c*) the concession at Swansea.

Secondly, it does not appear from the Swansea speech that Mr. Gladstone's own mind is fully assured that the Irish members should be permanently retained at Westminster. The suggestion —in immediate connection with the proposal to retain them for the present—that the Home Rule Bill, like the East India Charter, should be passed for a term of years, and that this part of the scheme may thus be reconsidered, indicates that Mr. Gladstone has not yet come to the central position of the Unionists. We say that we begin by keeping England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales in the imperial Parliament; and that we are prepared to deal with the Home Rule question on that basis, and that basis alone. Mr. Gladstone says, I begin with Home Rule and will not at present disturb the Irish representation, but will provide that the question shall come up after five or six years. Until

it becomes clear that Mr. Gladstone sees that in constructing a Home Rule Bill the retention of the Irish representatives at Westminster is a necessary postulate, the old trouble remains. Nor do I think that a five or six years' experiment in relation to the central principles of a settlement of this kind is admissible. Details may be reconsidered at any time, and may be reconsidered without defining a term for the Bill; but on the basis of the settlement we should make up our minds.

The difficulty of people like myself who are anxious for reunion is immensely increased by the fact that the only advisers and colleagues now left to Mr. Gladstone are—or have been till now—against us. The Radical Union Conference at Birmingham was held after Mr. Morley's speech at Norwich, and after Mr. Gladstone's letter to his correspondent in West Birmingham, but before the Swansea speech. It seemed to me reasonable for the Unionists to conclude that there was absolutely no hope of an understanding with their old chief, whom many of them would be glad to follow again. They therefore were driven to adopt an independent policy. It might almost be said that they burnt their boats. Those of us who would describe ourselves as Home Rule Unionists are therefore left without leaders in the party. It will be hard for us to return without the men who have secured the first step towards the kind of policy we desire.

No doubt, an unreserved acceptance of the present constitution of Parliament involves the essential elements of the settlement for which we have pleaded; but it is a little hard for us to be confident that all will go right when the acceptance of the fundamental principle seems hesitating and qualified, and when the men who have contended for it are thrown out of the party.

I have spoken of myself as a Radical Unionist, but as I think I told you I have never joined the Radical Union. It has been so clear to me for many months that Mr. Gladstone's most loyal and passionate supporters were just where I am myself in relation to the cardinal question, that I determined to remain in the camp.

25th June 1887.

The reason that Mr. Gladstone's speech at Swansea is not satisfactory is that until he sees that the retention of the Irish members is vital to the unity of Great Britain and Ireland there is no security that he will not draw a Bill which within four or five years will make their retention impossible. It is plain from his speech that the unity of Great Britain and Ireland is with him *secondary* and Home Rule *primary*. He has made a great move, and the true solution loses nothing by waiting. One's only

regret is that every six months of waiting lessens the prospect of the settlement being in his hands. To project a scheme is no doubt difficult, it is also inexpedient. But the constitution of the Provincial Assemblies of the Canadian Confederation has been again and again referred to by Mr. Chamberlain as suggesting the lines of an Irish scheme, and I do not see why this should not work.

Hartington's speech at Manchester yesterday seems to me full of hope that within a year or two we shall get this question through.

Dale's forecast of events was sadly at fault. Time does not always heal. The estranging currents were already running rapidly and strongly. The Crimes Bill of 1887, and the support given to it by the Liberal Unionists, accentuated the antagonism; and before twelve months had passed, Dale recognised that things had drifted too far, and that political work for him had come to an end. His Australian journey helped to withdraw him from the conflict.

The silence that he had imposed on himself was not broken for five years; and when he spoke, it was in response to a challenge that he could not ignore. The Home Rule Bill of 1892 was before the country; it left the Irish representation in Parliament untouched. His speech of 1886 was reprinted, with the assertion that unless he were "a weather-cock," he must stand in the position now occupied by the majority of the Liberal party. The details of his reply[1] would be superfluous. In substance, he explained that he had not changed his ground, save at one point. He did not believe now, as he believed in 1886, that Mr. Gladstone's action had made an Irish Parliament inevitable; but he was still in favour of conceding a large measure of self-government to an Irish legislature, subordinate to the imperial Parliament and not practically independent of it; to that condition he firmly adhered.

But, as shown on the face of the letter, he wrote as one whose political ardour had cooled, and whose thought had

[1] The *Independent*, 1st July 1892.

turned to other things. The break-up of the Liberal party had changed all the conditions of his life. How the breach had affected social and personal relations in Birmingham, is described in a letter to the Dean of Salisbury. How it had affected himself may be seen in the letter that follows; and the isolation was destined to become even more complete than he then foresaw.

To Mrs. James Stuart

22nd May 1889.

For myself I am afraid that I am more of an exile than ever, and yet I cannot go right into the Union camp. I accept this isolation as a release from political work altogether. If I were twenty or even ten years younger, or if I had not other matters on hand for which life is likely to be too short, I might try to have my own say; but it would be useless to say anything unless one were prepared to persist in saying it and to fight for it. This would mean more time and strength than I can spare; and so I turn aside and elect to keep to the kind of work to which it might have been well—though I do not know—that I should have given all my strength.

It has been suggested that his withdrawal from politics was due to a desire to avoid conflict with old friends, and more especially to lessen the dangers of political division and animosity among Congregationalists. This, no doubt, was among the considerations that decided his action; but it was not the sole, nor even the supreme motive.

To Professor G. P. Fisher

14th April 1890.

. . . I do not like the close alliance between the Liberal Unionists and the Conservatives. If I were in Parliament I should try to keep the present Government in office, but should make it clear that it was not because I loved them. Being out of Parliament, that irksome duty does not rest on me. And old feelings of respect for Mr. Gladstone would make it very unpleasant for me to listen to the kind of attack on him in which some of the Unionists very naturally indulge.

But personal regret was overshadowed by public disappointment. The prostration of Liberalism imperilled, or delayed, the triumph of principles that he had cherished and of causes that he had served with a life-long devotion. The leaders in whom he had most confidence, and from whom he had hoped most, were enlisted on the side of reaction. Defeat had come at the moment when victory had seemed nearest. The flowing tide had ebbed, leaving barren sand and desolate shingle; a generation might pass before it would turn, and he felt himself already an old man with but a few brief years before him. Nothing was wanting to embitter the calamity.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SCHOOL BOARD, THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, AND MANSFIELD COLLEGE

(1) THE SCHOOL BOARD :—The first Board—The Liberal minority—Debates at the Board—Bible reading and Bible teaching—The Bible as an English classic—Undenominational religion; its perils—The secular policy of the second Board: religious teaching left to the churches—The Religious Education Society—Causes of failure—Return to Bible reading—Dale's objection to note or comment—Ten years' work—Dale in committee. —(2) THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL :—History of the Foundation—Sectarian supremacy—The Commissioners' Report in 1868—The new constitution —Dale nominated a governor by London University—Further changes —The new Grammar Schools—Dale's share in the work—Bailiff for a second year—Services to the Foundation.—(3) MANSFIELD COLLEGE :— Dale's connection with Spring Hill—The older universities and students for the ministry—Development of Dale's opinions—Letter from Mr. T. H. Green—Removal of Spring Hill to Oxford—Obstacles surmounted —Doctrinal clauses in the trust-deed—Mansfield College—Site secured and plans adopted—Dr. Fairbairn its first Principal—Temporary arrangements—Opening ceremonies—Dale's resignation of the Chairmanship— Letters on the progress of the enterprise.

DALE'S work in education falls into three divisions—his work as a member of the Birmingham School Board; as a Governor of the Schools on the Foundation of King Edward VI.; and as Chairman of the theological college first known as Spring Hill and afterwards as Mansfield College, Oxford. Without entering into minute detail, it may be possible to give some idea of his activity in these various capacities.

I

He was a member of the School Board for more than ten years—from its first election in 1870 till the close of

1880, when he resigned his seat on account of the increasing claims of King Edward's School upon his time and strength. For his first three years at the Board, he was one of a minority. The Liberal Association, trusting to luck rather than organisation, contested the whole of the fifteen seats; and this error in tactics, combined with the vagaries of the cumulative vote, placed a majority in power returned by a minority of voters. The Liberal candidates, with more than 220,600 votes, and 14,700 voters, carried six seats;[1] the Church candidates, with 158,700 votes, and 10,200 voters, carried eight. Canon O'Sullivan, the Roman Catholic representative, made up the number.

In debate the minority were very much more than a match for their opponents, who faced them, however, with admirable courage. "They were the acknowledged leaders of the Liberal party in the borough, and the ablest speakers and debaters which the town could produce when it was celebrated for a wealth of talent amongst public men."[2] And as their position on the Board prevented them from carrying their principles into effect, they resolved to find other means of setting their policy before the country. The Act by which School Boards were constituted left them large discretion in carrying out their duties; many questions, including some of the first importance, had been deliberately left by the legislature to be settled by local option. Their functions were fresh and unfamiliar. It was reasonable therefore, the minority urged, that these questions should be freely and fully discussed: they intended to discuss them. This intention they carried out, notwithstanding the opposition of the majority, who wished to push matters to a vote. The debates, which were public, excited much interest. On a field-day the Board Room was not unlike the Black Hole of Calcutta. The *Daily Post*, then and still of paramount influence in the Midland Counties,

[1] The Liberal members of the Board were Joseph Chamberlain, R. W. Dale, George Dawson, George Dixon, and J. S. Wright.

[2] F. Adams, *The Elementary School Contest*, p. 255.

gave full reports of the proceedings. Some of the most important speeches made by members of the minority were published separately. And so, though out-voted—not indeed invariably; for now and then they succeeded in capturing one of their opponents—the minority were able to hold their adversaries in check, and to exert a considerable effect on the policy of other Boards elsewhere.

They joined issue at once. The Church party proposed to enforce compulsory attendance at school before a single Board School had been built, and to pay fees at the existing denominational schools for the children of indigent parents. These proposals were stoutly resisted. The debate on the payment of fees lasted through several meetings of the Board, and in the course of it Dale made one of his most powerful speeches. Outvoted at the Board, the minority prolonged the conflict elsewhere and with other allies. The Town Council refused to honour the School Board precept for levying a rate, and persisted in their opposition until a "mandamus" was obtained from the Court of Queen's Bench. Even then feeling in the town was so strong, and so many ratepayers were prepared to suffer distraint, that the Board, to avoid a public scandal, never put their bye-law in force.

The proposals of the majority with regard to religious instruction in Board Schools were also resisted. Their scheme provided that the Bible should be read and taught daily, and that prayers and hymns, selected under the direction of the Board, should be used in the schools—due care being taken that the safeguards contained in the Education Act should be strictly observed, and that no attempt should be made "to attach children to, or to detach them from any particular denomination."[1]

In the discussions that ensued Dale took a prominent part. At this time he had been induced to abandon the position that he had previously held, and to which he subsequently returned—the principle of secular instruction

[1] Bye-laws of the Birmingham School Board, § iii. *Education and School Management*, ii.: Regulations in regard to religious instruction, §§ 7, 8.

by the School Board, religious instruction by the churches. Bible reading without note or comment was then included in the programme of the Education League, and was accepted by his colleagues at the Board.[1]

But Dale admitted the Bible into the schools—so he persuaded himself, at least—on secular, not on religious grounds; not as containing a supernatural revelation and a Divine rule of life, but as a great English classic, rich in "the noblest poetry, the loftiest eloquence, the most pathetic and beautiful narratives," which had "helped to give form to the English language and had exerted a powerful influence on English literature."[2] A man who did not know his Bible was imperfectly educated. To illustrate this point, he used to tell the story of what took place at the close of the great speech in which Mr. Bright spoke of the Cave of Adullam—into which the opponents of the Reform Bill had gathered the factious and the discontented. As the House was breaking up, one member said to another, "Where did he get that illustration from?" "Oh," said the other, "from the *Arabian Nights*." "Ah," said the first, "I remember now!" The secular education of those gentlemen, said Dale, was flagrantly incomplete.

He looked back on this aberration with pain and humiliation. But even when he was willing that the Bible should be read by the teacher, he refused to allow the teacher to explain it. Any explanation of the Bible that could be described as "undogmatic" he always regarded with distrust. In the debate on the scheme of religious instruction proposed by the majority, he argued that religious teaching which would not be likely "to attach the children to any particular denomination" would end in detaching them from all. He expressed his alarm at the tendency of modern thought to depreciate the importance of definite religious teaching, and his conviction that

[1] *National Education League: Report of the First General Meeting*, pp. 187-194. (Mr. Dawson, it should be said, maintained this position to be inconsistent with their principles.)

[2] *Religious Instruction in Board Schools: Report of a Debate at the Birmingham School Board*, p. 19.

nothing was so likely to bring about the destruction of whatever religious faith still survived in England. Undenominational teaching, if genuine, he believed would ultimately leave men without a religion at all. And if religion were to be taught by the masters and mistresses of the schools, how could it be ensured that they should possess that personal faith without which no one can teach religion effectively? Teachers, as a class, were neither more religious nor less religious than other people. To take religious earnestness as a test would disqualify many who were eminently fitted for secular teaching; and a strong personal faith often existed in men and women who yet were utterly unfit to give religious instruction.

Dale believed that religion, if taught, must be taught with enthusiasm. The religion of "moderation and of good sense," which some of his opponents admired, was a temple of mist, and built upon the sand; the "restraint" upon the teacher, which some of them commended as a check upon fanaticism, could not fail, as he thought, to paralyse the force and to chill the fervour of the spirit. Such a teacher "would breathe the very spirit of scepticism into the hearts which he ought to inspire with religious faith."[1]

In 1873, when the second election came, the position of parties was reversed. The Liberal supremacy at the Board was as strong as it was in the town. The majority at once discontinued the religious teaching in the schools, and repealed the existing regulations on the subject. A year or so before this time, the National Education League had modified its original position;[2] it had abandoned the principle of Bible reading without note or comment, and had accepted a new plan allowing religious teaching to be given in the schools by religious bodies at their own cost and by their own teachers appointed for that purpose.[3]

[1] *Religious Teaching by School Boards perilous to the religious Faith and Life of the Nation*, p. 3.

[2] 18th January 1872.

[3] At the Manchester Conference of Nonconformists this plan was discussed at length. The delegates finally declared, in the event of the plan being adopted, that in no case should the schoolmaster be employed to give religious

In anticipation of this change in the policy of the Board, the Birmingham Religious Education Society was established by Dale and his friends shortly before the election in the autumn of 1873. On 25th February 1874 they were authorised by the Board to give religious instruction in the schools, on payment of a small rent for the use of the buildings. They relied at the outset upon the agency of voluntary teachers.[1] The instruction—following a short religious service—included those truths which are held in common by the Evangelical Churches. For some time the Society prospered. It had a strong force of teachers, most of them trained in Sunday Schools, and all full of enthusiasm for their work. The examiners' reports were encouraging. But as the Board Schools were multiplied, it proved impossible to keep pace with their growth. The constituency to which the Society appealed was limited. The clergy, with one or two exceptions, held aloof; and so for the most part did the Wesleyans. At the close of 1876, the schools of the Board contained accommodation for 15,690 children; the schools in which religious instruction was given accommodated only 9354; so that 6300 children were left unprovided for. Every year, as new schools were erected—there were twenty-six in 1880—this discrepancy between supply and demand became more glaring.

Some difficulties arose in connection with discipline. Many of those engaged in the work found it hard to keep their classes in hand. The experience of the Sunday School, with its smaller numbers and more uniform type, did not enable them to deal with the children of the Board School. Dean Close, who vigorously attacked the Society and its methods, in a letter to the *Times*[2] described the teachers as "untrained, untaught, and undisciplined";

instruction. They held that he should be the servant of the Board, not of a sect; and that in country districts especially, without such a provision, he might be *required* to give religious instruction as a condition of appointment. —General Conference of Nonconformists held at Manchester, 23rd-25th January 1872. *Authorised Report*, p. 255; pp. 154-163; 253-261.

[1] At a later period some paid teachers were employed.

[2] *Times*, 18th January 1876.

and Dale in his reply[1] hardly met the issue when he said that their self-sacrificing devotion proved them to have "the supreme qualification for the work." The *Times*, it should be said, was more friendly to the Society than the Dean. It dwelt upon its defects, but more than once appealed to the clergy to accept the situation, if they could not change it, and urged them to take advantage of the facilities within their reach.[2]

The clergy, however, were stubborn; their hostility and the indifference of the Wesleyans, coupled with the rapid growth of the School Board system, proved fatal to the real success of the scheme. And in course of time the Society was weakened by other influences. When the Society was formed, it was generally believed that most of the children attending the Board Schools lay beyond the reach of the Churches. But experience and inquiry showed that this was not the case. A very high percentage of the children were to be found in Sunday Schools, and many of the rest attended religious worship, more or less irregularly, with their parents. This discovery broke the force of the Society's appeal for voluntary service. And when in 1879 the Board modified its policy, and made Bible reading a part of the ordinary school exercises, the Society's strength was still further diminished. Many of its teachers sent in their resignations; and their number fell from 164 in 1878 to 83 in 1881, and to 58 in 1882; and the average attendance of scholars, which in 1877 had been 6670, was reduced to 4000. The Society, therefore, was dissolved and reconstituted on a new basis. Since then it has continued to carry on a most useful work, on a smaller scale but with larger efficiency, by inducing churches to undertake to provide religious instruction in their various districts, and by supplementing their efforts in case of need from the central organisation. Dale's solicitude for the success of the Society, his devotion to its interests, his readiness to defend it against all comers, on the platform or in the

[1] *Times*, 21st January 1876.
[2] *Times*, 21st January 1876, 20th January 1877.

newspaper, were incessant. He was grievously disappointed by its failure to solve the problem of religious education under School Boards, although he felt that the responsibility of failure lay with others and not with the Society and its supporters, and that they had proved success to be attainable if all the Churches would do their part in the discharge of a common duty.

Had the experiment of the Religious Education Society proved successful, the system might have taken root and spread widely. But even in Birmingham some of its warmest supporters, such as Alderman Manton, were dissatisfied with its results, though they wished its work to be supplemented, not abandoned. After much controversy, in 1879, Mr. Dixon and Mr. Wright, two of the Liberal majority on the Board, declared themselves in favour of Bible reading. Dale and the rest of their colleagues resisted the proposal, which was finally carried by the Chairman's casting vote.

This was the last conflict over the religious question in which Dale took part as a member of the Board ; but after his resignation, on more than one occasion, he led the opposition to attempts at compromise between the clergy and the Liberal party. In 1885 the conflict was severe. To avoid a contested election, the leaders of the Clerical and Lay Council agreed to withdraw a candidate on condition that their proposals were submitted for consideration to the Committee of the Liberal Association—the "Two Thousand." Selected passages of the Scriptures were already read in the schools ; they asked that historical, geographical, and grammatical explanations should be given by the teachers, and that the Lord's Prayer should be used daily in the schools, and should be repeated by the children. Before the "Two Thousand" met to decide upon the proposals, Dale addressed a letter—a pamphlet of sixteen pages—to each member of the Committee, urging them to reject the compromise, as certain to lead to further demands which it would then be more difficult to resist ; as opening the way, through "grammatical" explanations, to that religious teaching which it professed

to exclude; and as perilous in its effect on the religious life of the children. "In reading the Bible," he said, "their minds will naturally be drawn to those points which are explained by the teacher; the rest will be passed over with indifference. They will be trained and disciplined by the practice of six days in the week, extending over five or six years, to fix their thoughts on those parts of the Bible which have no moral or religious interest. Before they leave school a habit will be formed which they will find it hard to break." [1]

He followed up his letter with a speech at the meeting, replying to the criticism that it had called forth. The compromise was rejected by a majority of at least seven to one. At the election of 1891 all idea of agreement was abandoned, and the leaders of the clerical party adopted as their platform the London system of definite religious instruction.

It has been necessary to dwell at some length upon this side of Dale's work at the School Board, because among the Nonconformists of the country he was specially identified with the policy of the Board in relation to religious education, and also because he so largely helped for many years to keep the Liberal party in the town steadfast in the principles which they had adopted. But if his activity and interest had been confined to questions of this kind—if he had been a controversialist and debater and nothing more—his influence would have been widely different from what it was. Without attempting to match one man against another, or to estimate what share Mr. Dixon, Mr. Chamberlain, and Dale had respectively in shaping and developing the system of elementary education in Birmingham, it may be safely said that the schools of the town in their earlier growth owed more to them than to any other three men who could be named.

It must not be forgotten that when the first Board was

[1] "Religious Worship and Bible Teaching in Board Schools: a Letter to the 'Two Thousand,'" p. 14. This letter contains Dale's most complete and incisive statement of his mature opinions on the question at issue.

elected in 1870, the task before it was altogether new, and that the problems with which its members had to grapple, both then and for several years after, were wholly unfamiliar. Till then we had isolated schools but no system: even in a single town there was no organic unity in elementary education. The new Boards had to do their work without experience to enlighten or precedent to guide. If in some cases they went astray—if they made mistakes and had to pay for them—it should excite no surprise: the wonder is that they should so soon have devised a system that would answer.

At Birmingham the first duty of the School Board was to determine the amount of school accommodation required by the town. Having ascertained this, they next had to settle where the new schools should be placed to meet the varying exigencies of different districts. To acquire the sites—without litigation if possible; to agree upon the plans; to approve the specifications, to select builders, to raise the money required for the cost of erection and maintenance; to arrange for the management of the schools when in use, to provide them with a competent staff, to define their educational aims—beyond the requirements of the Code—and to secure the regular attendance of the children; to provide the schools, to fill the schools, and to teach the scholars, involved an incalculable amount of labour, thought, and study. The task was one that could not be accomplished at a stroke. Practically, it took ten years to overtake the educational needs of the town. Dale saw the beginning and the end of this epoch in the Board's history. After he retired, Mr. Dixon was the only member surviving from the original Board.

Within the ten years twenty-eight schools had been built and opened. The bye-law enforcing compulsory attendance had been gradually extended to all parts of the town. For every child at school in 1870 there were three in 1880. Great strides had been made in the organisation of the teaching system. The Board had its visitors to follow up absentees, its inspectors to test the efficiency of the staff; it had replaced pupil teachers to a

considerable extent by adult assistants, and it had a force of qualified teachers in reserve who could be called in at once in any case of emergency. It had established a system of evening schools, and in the ordinary day schools it had paid special attention to the teaching of singing and drawing. Its organisation was a living force, ever developing new modes of activity, accommodating itself to new conditions, and prepared to expand with the growth of the town. One feature in the system of the Board should not be overlooked. It never appointed separate bodies of school-managers entrusted with the control and the regulation of details; it preferred to manage its schools by means of a committee of the Board—a method entailing a larger amount of labour and responsibility, and not free from serious drawbacks, though it secured a more complete uniformity in the various parts of the system.

One honourable characteristic distinguished the Birmingham School Board from the first. Almost without exception the active men on both sides were bent on doing their best by the schools. They were determined that the buildings should be fine as well as convenient. In Birmingham, some one has said, the public buildings are better than the private houses; in most towns it is the other way. The playgrounds were spacious; the dimensions of the class-rooms were not limited by the requirements of the Department. At first the expenditure occasioned some outcry. The ratepayer was invoked against the Board; but in those days, at least, the appeal was in vain. The citizens were proud of their schools, and they did not grudge the outlay. For many years—whatever may have happened later—no public man of any weight stooped to advocate a parsimonious policy.

On the Board, as in most administrative bodies, the bulk of the work was done in committee; and Dale took more than his share of it. He served on the Education and School Management Committee, the most laborious of all, for several years as Chairman, and on the Finance Committee also. During the six years 1870-76, in spite of two long periods of absence in the East and in

America, he attended 370 meetings out of a possible total of 475. And with him attendance meant more than mere presence. To use a boating phrase, he was never a "passenger": he helped business forward. He came prepared, often by hours of labour at home; and while at work he gave an undivided mind to the affairs in hand. He was always anxious in dealing with men of opposite opinions, where no principle was involved, to find some common ground on which to meet them: where concession was allowable he was ready to concede. And in matters of educational interest his ardour and his patience knew no bounds. The Head-master of the Grammar School, the Rev. A. R. Vardy, who worked with him for many years, said after his death:—

> He had an intense belief in education, a wonderful enthusiasm for it, and an enthusiasm that was contagious, and carried away and carried on with him those who were working by his side. He had a wide knowledge of educational methods, a firm grasp of educational principles, and an astonishing familiarity with those details of educational work which are perhaps seldom known outside the profession and not always within it.

Even those who in many things were opposed to him at the Board were accustomed to lean on his strength and his discernment. When he withdrew in 1880, both parties felt that they were losing one of their most efficient workers.

II

Dale's work at the Grammar School should be regarded as a continuation and completion of his work at the School Board. At the Board he had helped to build up a system of public elementary education in Birmingham; here he was engaged in carrying forward the system to a higher point—in filling the interval between the elementary school and the technical college or the university. The task was one that lay very close

to his own interests; he took great pleasure in the work; and even after he had been compelled to abandon other forms of public service he still continued to act as a governor of the Foundation. The period during which he held this office lasted from June 1878 until his death in March 1895. He was Bailiff, or Chairman, of the Foundation in 1882 and 1883, and Chairman of the School Committee—the committee most directly concerned with the organisation and management of the schools—for more than ten years.

The Grammar School and the School Board were institutions as widely different in character as in age. The School Board was a modern creation, without a past, and bare of traditions. The Grammar School had its origin in remote centuries, and its history had been closely bound up with the fortunes of the town. Among the guilds which existed in Birmingham at an early date was the Guild of the Holy Cross, established by letters-patent of Richard II., 7th August 1392. A century and a half later the Guild, though not strictly speaking a religious foundation, was dissolved by Henry VIII. in the year 1529. Its charter was cancelled; its lands were seized. But when Edward VI. came to the throne, the citizens of Birmingham begged that the property might be restored; and the king granted their petition, stipulating that the income derived from the lands should be used for the establishment and maintenance of a free grammar school. The condition was accepted; and so out of the ancient Guild came the Foundation of Edward VI. But not as it exists to-day. Its income then was £21 a year; it is close upon £40,000 now; and instead of one school there are now nine, and will be eleven.[1]

The changes in the management of the Foundation

[1] There is a tradition—it may be only a legend, but it has been embalmed in an official Blue-book—that the original governors of the school at Birmingham and of its neighbour at Bromsgrove, founded at the same time, were offered their choice between endowment in money or in land. Birmingham chose land, Bromsgrove money. And so, while the Birmingham foundation has grown wealthier year by year, Bromsgrove still receives from the original endowment only a few pounds a year.

have also been great. Without attempting to trace its history, the vicissitudes through which it passed, or the process by which it came into the control of a section of the citizens, it may be said that for many years before the new scheme of management prepared by the Charity Commissioners received the sanction of Parliament in 1878, the governors of the school and the representatives of public opinion in the town had been engaged in incessant conflict. The governors were self-elected. As vacancies occurred by death or by removal from Birmingham, successors were chosen by co-optation. The Board was kept as far as possible of one colour. All its members were Churchmen; almost all of them Conservatives: the Liberal element was sufficient to tinge but not to taint it. Against this injustice the town had struggled in vain. Dr. Miller, when Rector of St. Martin's, had publicly expressed his dissatisfaction. An association for the reform of the Grammar School, founded in 1865, had been supported by men of all kinds in its efforts to bring about a change. At the Inquiry held by the Endowed Schools Commission, protest after protest came from the witnesses who appeared before them. Mr. T. H. Green, one of the assistant commissioners, reported:—

> The Board has fairly represented the upper or more select section of society in Birmingham, so far as this section is politically Conservative and attached to the Established Church. It has been necessarily antagonistic to the Town Council, and careless or contemptuous of local politics. To belong to it has been a certain social distinction. Social and municipal distinction have not coincided, and hence the Board has been an object of public animosity, irrespectively of the manner in which it has exercised its functions.

The Commission in their Report put the case more definitely and more strongly.

> No Dissenter, within the memory of man, has been a governor; till recently no one of Liberal politics has been a governor; no mayor of the town has till the present year [1868]

been a governor; no member of the borough except one, a Conservative; not one Town Councillor.

The scheme of 1878 swept this system away. It established a Board of twenty-one governors: eight appointed by the Town Council; three by the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and London; one by the teachers on the Foundation; the remaining nine to be elected by co-optation. Dale, who had taken an active part in the preceding conflict, had given evidence before the Commission, and had helped in other ways to bring about the reform, was one of the first governors so appointed. It had been expected that he would be nominated by the Town Council; but the Council, disappointed by their failure to obtain entire control, chose all their eight members out of their own body—a policy that provoked some resentment. Dale was nominated by London University. He was probably the most distinguished representative of that University then in Birmingham, and although some were afraid that he might be too much of a partisan, the objection was overruled, and proved in experience to be wholly groundless.

The scheme of the Commissioners to some extent also reorganised the arrangement of the schools. Before it was approved, the schools on the Foundation were (*a*) the Grammar School in New Street, with three divisions —Classical, English, and Lower—containing in all about 600 boys; (*b*) eight branch schools of an elementary type, containing 600 boys and 550 girls. It substituted for these: (*a*) a High School for boys up to the age of nineteen; (*b*) a Middle School for boys up to the age of sixteen; (*c*) eight Lower Middle Schools for boys and girls up to fourteen; (*d*) a High School for girls—but this part of the plan was deferred until suitable buildings could be procured. A further change was that fees were henceforth to be charged in all the schools of the Foundation, but one-third of the places in each school were to be filled by free scholars appointed by competition.

This arrangement was not permanent; it was modified in the course of a few years, and Dale was in large measure responsible for carrying through the changes that were made. So far as aim and idea were concerned, he was only one of several acting together. Dr. Harper, the Principal of Jesus College, Oxford; Dr. Heslop, Mr. William Kenrick, Mr. Dixon, and some others, were all concerned in the development of the new policy; but it fell to Dale as Bailiff to take the lead in the negotiations with the Charity Commissioners, and to keep the threads of the policy firmly grasped. The position involved much work and more anxiety.

The Commissioners' scheme had retained the branch schools for boys and girls which it found already existing. At that time the schools were elementary schools—the best elementary schools in England some of them were said to be—but they did not attempt work of a higher type. And as the public elementary schools of the borough became more efficient, the need for these Lower Middle Schools—as they were then called—became less. The two sets of schools covered the same ground; and although the Lower Middle Schools in their more advanced classes rose above the level of the Board Schools, there was no clear distinction in character and aim between the two. In 1881, therefore, after three years' experience, the governors of the Foundation decided to apply to the Charity Commission for authority to raise these schools to a higher grade in the educational system; by extending the limit of age from fourteen to sixteen, and by including in the course of instruction subjects which hitherto had not been attempted. Practically, their proposals involved the establishment of a new set of schools intermediate between the elementary school on the one side and the High School on the other. In an address delivered in July 1881, Dale described in outline the policy of the governors. Briefly put, it came to this: that they were seeking to make an open path for every clever and industrious child in Birmingham from the public elementary schools of the borough, through the

new "Grammar Schools"—as they were to be called—to the High School, and thence to the universities. When the changes then in contemplation had been completed, no town in England, he said, would compare with Birmingham in educational advantages; and the only city in the United Kingdom that would equal or excel it was the city of Edinburgh.

The Commissioners assented to the governors' proposals in the main, even though they affected a scheme so recently sanctioned after much discussion. Step by step the fresh changes, and those portions of the earlier plan to which effect had not yet been given, were carried out. The English School, which still remained in New Street as the Middle School, was transferred to the buildings purchased in Edgbaston at the Five Ways, and became one of the new Grammar Schools. Some of the existing Lower Middle Schools were removed to more suitable situations; all were reorganised on the footing of Grammar Schools. Accommodation was thus provided for 750 boys and the like number of girls. Two similar schools were left to be built at some future time. The new High School for girls was also established, first in New Street, and then in Congreve Street.

Some characteristics of the system should be noted. (1) The fees were low in all the schools—£3 a year in the Grammar Schools; £12 a year in the High School. (2) One-third of the pupils in each school were foundation scholars receiving a free education. (3) One-half of the scholarships in the High School were awarded by an entrance examination; the other half by examination within the school. (4) In the Grammar Schools one-half of the scholarships were reserved for candidates coming from public elementary schools; of the remaining half two-thirds were offered for competition within the school, and the other one-third for open competition amongst all candidates for admission. (5) The subjects of the entrance examination at the Grammar Schools were restricted to those that are taught in the public elementary schools; and at the High School to the subjects taught in the Grammar

Schools. The educational "ladder" was a reality and not a pleasant fiction.

While all these changes were in progress Dale was Bailiff. The office is usually held in rotation for a year. But in his case the rule was broken, and he was asked to serve for a second time. His letters show that he appreciated the honour, and that he was glad to be able to render a service to the Foundation from which Nonconformists had for so long been excluded.

To Mr. Henry Lee

21st December 1882.

. . . You will be interested to know that the Grammar School governors have made me Bailiff for a second year. Only a little time ago the Board was exclusively Church and almost exclusively Tory; it is a curious revolution. For a Nonconformist minister to be on the Board at all is enough to bring some of the old governors out of their graves; and for him to be Bailiff for two years running, is enough to send them back to their graves if they came out.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

2nd December 1882.

The governors of King Edward's School have re-elected me Bailiff for next year. They put it on the ground that the educational changes are in course of development, and that it is important to keep the lines in the same hands. Richard Chamberlain, who is Deputy, and who ought to have succeeded, put the matter so handsomely, and it was so cordially supported, that I could not refuse. It will be a great stroke of work to have had any part in carrying through.

When he retired from the Bailiff's chair at the close of the second year, a special vote of thanks was passed to him.

It is ordered that the best thanks of the Governors be and are hereby presented to Dr. R. W. Dale for the courtesy and ability with which he has presided over the Board as Bailiff during the years 1882 and 1883, and the Board desire to record their deep sense of the untiring energy and self-denying devotion

which Dr. Dale has dedicated to the service of the Foundation in the difficult and laborious task of carrying into effect the new Scheme for the regulation of the Foundation.

There is no need to dwell on the services that he rendered to the Foundation as Chairman of the School Committee. It was work that required tact, patience, insight, knowledge; mainly concerned with details, but with details involving principles, and where it was not always easy to decide between divergent interests and conflicting claims. The testimony of one of his colleagues—the one who saw his work most closely and who was most capable of appreciating it—attests its value.

No other man could during the period of reorganisation have done with the same efficiency the work he undertook, and none at a later period could have supervised the development of the schools with equal skill and judgment or with more beneficial effect. His influence was felt throughout the Foundation: he was the recognised adviser of his colleagues the governors, he was the trusted friend of the teachers, and he was the faithful and watchful guardian of the scholars.

The testimony of the Head-master of the Boys' High School has already been given to the power that Dale exerted on those with whom and for whom he had to work. Miss Creak, the Head-mistress of the Girls' High School, felt it no less deeply. On receiving from him the announcement of his resignation, she wrote as follows:—

From Miss Creak

29th January 1895.

I read your letter this morning with very mingled feelings. You will not wonder that I felt a very deep sense of regret. Ever since I have known anything of King Edward's School I have felt what an inestimable benefit it enjoyed in your guidance and counsels, and every year has only deepened my sense of what we all owe to you. To work under such wise, generous, large-minded government as yours, with the sense that every effort for good met with full appreciation, every error of judgment with the gentlest judgment, every difference of opinion with the

most generous weighing, has been a position to waken and keep alive the very best of those who were responsible to you. For myself I do not know how to thank you for the long years of unvarying kindness. I feel very deeply that I owe by far the greatest part of the happiness I have found here to you.

III

If Dale had been asked what was the most important work—outside the pastorate—in which he had been engaged during the course of his life, he would have replied that it was the removal of Spring Hill College to Oxford, and its reconstitution on a new basis as Mansfield College. No other enterprise with which he was associated touched him so closely; no other institution filled so large a place in his heart.

From the very beginning of his ministry his connection with Spring Hill College was very close. At Mr. James's death he was appointed Chairman of the Educational Board, and he so became in large measure responsible for the policy and administration of the college. He served it in many ways. He lectured there—once in his early days on Homiletics, and again at a later period on Pastoral Theology. By his personal efforts he helped to release the college from its financial difficulties. He was consulted about any serious case of discipline when such arose. Next to Carr's Lane, Spring Hill, he always felt, had the strongest claim on his services; and more than once when he was inclined to leave Birmingham, his attachment to the college turned the balance and helped to keep him there. Dr. Simon, for many years Principal of Spring Hill, has borne the testimony of experience to his devotion.

He filled the office of Chairman of the Educational Board during the whole of my tenure of office, and more fortunate in the holder of such a position no teachers could have been. Never was there a shadow of meddling; he shrank even from doing in the college what might fairly have been expected of him, for fear of seeming to interfere. Once he gave some admirable lectures on pastoral practice, at my request; but I had to *urge* it,

not because he was unwilling, but for some such reason as was just mentioned. If he had a fault, it was that of not asserting himself enough in connection with the business of the college. On several important occasions I thought he refrained from pressing his own larger, wiser judgment out of deference to the opinion of men altogether smaller than himself. It was ingrained considerateness and respect for the individuality of others that chiefly moved him thus to act.[1]

His position made him keenly alive to the defects and the difficulties of the college system of the Congregational churches. He welcomed any movement towards the amalgamation of separate institutions, and any attempt to establish some organic unity between them; but for many years he did not see his way to a new departure. That "dislike of new ventures" which he used to confess, held him back from any open rupture with the policy of the past. Even when it was apparent that before long Oxford and Cambridge would open their doors to Nonconformists, or would have them forced from outside, he expressed his conviction that in the very nature of the case the national universities could never be used for the education of Nonconformist ministers.[2] But during the next ten years he modified his opinions, and advised that some of the students at Spring Hill and other colleges should be sent to get their literary training at the universities, returning to the denominational colleges for their theological instruction; though he foresaw that the existing system must still be maintained for those who had to repair the deficiencies of their earlier education. He was warned that the experiment had its dangers: of the students who entered Oxford or Cambridge some would drift away from their Congregational principles, and others would yield to the attractions of the new world into which they were thrown. Dale met such objections in the heroic strain. He was willing, he said, to lose all the men who would be lost; Nonconformity at the universities kept as a rule all the men who were worth keeping. It was too bold a

[1] *British Weekly*, 21st March 1895.
[2] Wolverhampton, Congregational Union Meetings, 1869.

statement even then; and when college office as well as honours became open to Nonconformists, the situation was wholly changed. Not long after this expression of opinion —it may have been in consequence of it—Mr. T. H. Green, of Balliol—the philosopher, not the historian—wrote to him in urgent appeal that Nonconformists should realise and discharge the responsibilities laid upon them by the opening of the universities. Mr. Green spoke very frankly of the mischief that their indifference was doing.

From Mr. Thomas Hill Green [1]

The opening of the national universities to Nonconformists has been, in my judgment, an injury rather than a help to Nonconformity. You are sending up here, year after year, the sons of some of your best and wealthiest families; they are often altogether uninfluenced by the services of the Church which they find here, and they not only drift away from Nonconformity—they drift away and lose all faith; and you are bound, as soon as you have secured the opening of the universities for your sons, to follow them when you send them here, in order to defend and maintain their religious life and faith.

Dale was strongly moved by this appeal coming from a man in character and ability perhaps the most remarkable of his generation at Oxford; but he saw no immediate possibility of meeting it. He visited Cambridge, however, where at that time the need was most urgent, to ascertain what amount of sympathy a Congregational college—should one be established—could reckon on among the more liberal theologians of the place. He was received courteously, but without encouragement, and the plan went no farther. There the matter remained for several years, so far as he was concerned; and it was not until the idea of removing Spring Hill to Oxford took hold of him that he saw the way open to effective action—to give Nonconformity a place of education in Oxford and a

[1] Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College, Oxford, afterwards Whyte's Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford.

centre of religious life and influence, for the training of its ministry and the shepherding of its laity.

The idea was not his; that should be clearly understood. Who first suggested the scheme, and in what shape, it is impossible to say. Probably the credit rests with Dr. Simon who, while Principal of Spring Hill, urged that the college should be transferred to a university town. But Dr. Fairbairn and Professor James Bryce were also among the pioneers. Dale always acknowledged himself to have been a convert—and a late convert. For some time he was dubious; and in fact, he used to say, he converted himself in converting his friend, Alderman Manton, now as loyal to Mansfield as he was to Spring Hill. But without Dale, it is not too much to say, the idea would have been still-born. In the world of action "he begins who animates"; and from the initiation of the enterprise to its completion, Dale was its animating force. Without the help of others he would have been powerless. Dr. Fairbairn —marked out from the first as the future Principal—Mr. Albert Spicer, Dr. Hannay, Dr. Mackennal, and many more, shared the work with him; but he bound all the workers together. It was his part to lay the case in all its bearings before the Spring Hill trustees and to secure their adhesion—no easy task; and he conducted the negotiations with the Charity Commissioners to obtain their sanction of a scheme for modifying the terms of the original trust.

No part of the original endowment—not a penny belonging to Spring Hill—was available for building purposes; this expense had to be met by special contributions. The first estimate of the cost was £25,000; but it proved impossible to carry out the scheme in a manner worthy of the place—Oxford, as Dr. Jowett told them, "is critical in the matter of building"—for less than £45,000; and Dale, with Dr. Fairbairn and others to help him, went about the country from place to place to raise the sum required to open the college free from debt.

The negotiations with the Charity Commissioners were long and delicate, but not from any lack of sympathy on their part. Dale, who had often criticised their policy and their

methods with some severity, was eloquent in their praise. "I found," he said, "from the first time that I had an interview with them on this subject to the very end, a novel, intelligent, and eager interest in this scheme; and they did all in their power to promote its efficiency." But in dealing with the doctrinal clauses of the original trust-deed the Commissioners felt some scruple in modifying the provisions to the extent that was desired. They felt bound to retain some of the clauses to which objection had been taken. Finally, a compromise was effected which gave a larger freedom to the Trustees and the Professors than they had hitherto enjoyed, and in the cases of the students and the committee the doctrinal conditions were abolished. With this concession the advocates of freedom had to be content.[1]

As soon as the preliminary arrangements were at an end, an excellent site was secured on the cricket-ground of Merton College. Mr. Basil Champneys was appointed architect; and building operations began in April 1887.

[1] The original trust-deed contained the following declaration of faith: [He] "shall profess and declare, by writing under his hand, that he is a Dissenter from the Established Church, that he believes in the unity of the Divine nature, the divinity of Christ, the Atonement made by His death for sin, the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit, the necessity of the Spirit's influence for the illumination of the understanding and the renovation of the heart, the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and the Divine appointment of Infant Baptism." This declaration was required of (1) Tutors, (2) Trustees, (3) Students on the Foundation—who, however, were allowed by explicit regulation from the first to make the declaration in their own language. (The Professors, as will appear later, assumed the same privilege.) A similar declaration was required of (4) the members of the College Committee, but omitting the clauses relating to Dissent from the Established Church, and to the Divine appointment of Infant Baptism.

The declaration of faith now required by the amended scheme of (1) Professors, (2) Trustees, is as follows: [He] "shall declare in writing under his hand that he believes in the Unity of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the Divinity of Christ, in the Atonement for sin made by His death, and in man's need of the Holy Spirit to enlighten his mind and renew his heart; that he believes the Holy Scriptures to contain a revelation of God's grace to man, and the rule of man's faith and duty to God; and that he accepts and approves the practice of Infant Baptism. He shall also declare that he is a Dissenter from the Established Church."

A Professor or a Trustee is now explicitly allowed to make the declaration in such form of words as he shall think proper, and which shall be approved of by the Educational Board. No doctrinal declaration is now required of (3) Students, (4) members of Committee.

The plans included a Principal's house, a College Library and Lecture-rooms in the west wing; a College Chapel in the east wing; and in the main block of buildings a Dining Hall, two Common Rooms, and accommodation for the resident members of the staff.[1] Meanwhile, for three years, during the progress of the works, rooms were hired in the High Street, opposite All Souls' and close to St. Mary's—not without historical associations; for they had been occupied by Charles I. during the siege of Oxford, and had been used by the Union Society in Mr. Gladstone's undergraduate days when he declaimed against the Reform Bill of 1832. Dr. Fairbairn was appointed Principal, and entered upon his duties in October 1886.

The buildings were finished and ready for use in October 1889. The opening ceremonies were attended by several of the most eminent members of the university, and by supporters of the college from all parts of the country—one might almost say from all parts of the world; for the United States of America and the Australian colonies were represented by men of distinction. Dr. Fairbairn delivered an inaugural lecture; Dale preached the first sermon in the college chapel. Those who spoke at other meetings in the name of Oxford—Dr. Jowett, the Master of Balliol; Dr. Fowler, the President of Corpus Christi; and Dr. Jackson, the Rector of Exeter College—were most cordial in the welcome which they gave to Dr. Fairbairn and his colleagues; and Dr. Hatch, who had supported the scheme with enthusiasm from the first, declared that the college had come to give as well as to gain: that it would pour a stream of Evangelical life into the university, and would show the possibility of a vigorous

[1] No undergraduates' rooms were provided, for Mansfield was not intended to be a residential college on the model of Keble College, Oxford, or Selwyn College, Cambridge. The design of its founders was that its members should be graduates of Oxford, or men pursuing their literary course either in connection with the existing colleges or as unattached students of the university. It was established to give a theological, not a literary training; to supplement, not to supersede, the work of the university. Its students are not cut off from the social life of the place; and so far from being "consecrated to separation," it is "devoted to communion." The college takes its name from the Mansfield family by which Spring Hill had been founded.

Christianity which believes in Christ and yet is not sacerdotal. The *Times* expressed approval of the foundation of the college. The *Guardian* said that it was to be welcomed in the interests alike of the university and of the Church of England.

If it is impossible for Christians to be one, it is at least something that they should know why they are many. A theologically instructed Nonconformity may be no nearer to the Church; but it will, at least, exert a better influence upon the Church from which it stands apart.

The letters at the end of the chapter illustrate Dale's part in the enterprise. He continued to act as Chairman of the Council and of the Educational Board for several years, having been overruled in his desire that a younger man—with superior qualifications, as he thought, for the work—should take his place. When at length broken health compelled him to resign office, and to insist that his resignation should be accepted, it was a painful wrench. He felt, he said, as if he had lost a limb.

To his Wife

6th December 1884.

I saw Hope, one of the Charity Commissioners, this morning, and had from him the informal assurance that the Commissioners grant us substantially all we ask for—removal to Oxford, abolition of residence, abolition of non-theological Chairs. It is a great business; one of the greatest that I have ever had a hand in, and it means much anxious work for the next two years.

To the Rev. Dr. Fairbairn

17th December 1884.

We have had a meeting of the Committee of Spring Hill this afternoon, and everything has gone well. The minority have accepted the position, and will, I believe, work heartily with us in carrying the business through. The trustees will be called together immediately, and will, I hope, appoint a joint-committee to act on their behalf with the Commissioners in proposing a scheme. I

have made a discovery this evening which I wish I had made a year ago. It is clear to me now that by signing a declaration of belief the original Deed does not mean signing the definitions —does not mean this exclusively—but allows an equivalent statement to be drawn up in the words of the signer. The Deed requires the candidates for admission to sign "the like declaration" with professors, trustees, and committee-men; under the power given to the committee to frame General Regulations, they explicitly provided—the *first* committee did it—that candidates for admission might make the declaration in their own words: the first theological professor did the same.

To the Rev. Dr. Mackennal

14th March 1885.

You have heard, no doubt, of our scheme for removing Spring Hill to Oxford. The heads of the new constitution have been agreed upon, and are now before the Charity Commissioners. They are prepared to concede all the main points. I enclose an outline of it. In relation to the education of our own ministry and to the religious future of Oxford this movement has immense importance. If it is begun well, it will by God's blessing be the beginning of a new time. Fairbairn is invited to be Principal and Professor of Dogma. I think he will accept: indeed I should never have gone so far with the scheme unless I had had the strongest reason for believing that he would.

We have found an admirable site which I hope will be purchased, just under the shadow of Magdalen tower.[1]

Can I get some money for the buildings at Bowdon? I would come and expound the scheme to any men you could get together. It is a great sum to raise, and I am a poor beggar. But I am relying very much on your sympathy and support.

20th June 1885.

The Commissioners are very nervous about touching the doctrinal declaration. We have asked for two things—(1) the modification of the creed itself. It is really not a close and narrow one. The list of doctrines is not a long one; it is not touched with Calvinism; and with two exceptions it is simply

[1] Afterwards abandoned.

an *enumeration* not a *definition* of belief. The exceptions are the phrases "plenary inspiration" and the "Divine authority of Infant Baptism." About the second I cannot quite see the difficulty. Unless we have Divine authority, direct or mediate —in apostolic precedent or positive precept—I cannot see why we baptize children at all. However, the difficulty has been felt and we ask for a modification.

The definition contained in the clause about inspiration is more serious. We have taken almost the same words as were used by the first Professor of Dogmatics who was appointed by the original founders, and asked to insert them instead of "plenary inspiration." The question is still undetermined.

(2) We ask for an explicit statement in the Scheme that every one making the declaration may make it in his own words. This we are, I hope, likely to get. By express regulation the students have this liberty; by usage beginning with the appointment of the original Professor, the Professors have it. I told the Commissioner with whom we have had specially to do, that even if they did not put this in the Scheme we should certainly follow the usage of the college. . . . There is nothing, I think, at issue between the Commissioners and ourselves except the doctrinal question.

As to *my* going—how can I leave Birmingham? Had I entertained any purpose of going—indeed had I thought it were possible—I could never have touched the project.

To his Wife

5th October 1885.

I had a very cold journey to Manchester; but the luncheon was excellent and made one forget the journey. . . . There were fifty or sixty there, and I think we have got down the lines for a very good haul; but it will be necessary to see some of the men privately. The feeling was excellent. The following promises were made:—Abraham Haworth, £1000; Jesse Haworth, £999; Henry Lee, £500; Fisher, £100; Crewdson, £50. . . . I think we shall get £5000 out of Manchester before we have done. Lee announced himself as *almost* converted: Professor Wilkins described himself as a "converted sceptic." Dill, the Head-master of the Manchester Grammar School—an Oxford man—made a most effective speech for us. I have heard from Edward Spicer; he will have a gathering at his house in three or four weeks' time, but cannot have it this side of Sunday.

To Mrs. J. J. Colman

October 1886.

You will be glad to hear that we had a most successful opening day at Oxford on Monday. Everything went off as well as one could desire. The devout seriousness of the day was very remarkable, and was full of promise for the future. The new men whom we admitted made a most favourable impression. They are scholars and gentlemen, and their religious life seemed very true and Christian. To me it seemed like a fair dream. It was hard to believe that what I had been working and praying for, sometimes in the presence of great difficulties, had really come, and come so soon.

To the Rev. Dr. Fairbairn

5th February 1887.

I think that the proposal[1] requires a little consideration. . . . Mr. Champneys might suggest the Apostles—if he can think of nothing better—adding that it would be well to get the Building Committee to look at the subject. It seems to me to be hardly in our line. I should like rather some other group of twelve, *e.g.* four great theologians of the Catholic Church, including the East and the West, *e.g.* Augustine, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Gregory; then the English Augustine, and Wyclif, Luther, and Calvin; Cartwright, Robinson, Owen, and Howe. What do you think of that scheme? Or striking out Chrysostom and Gregory, there might be À Kempis and Aquinas. Other variations are possible.

2nd January 1888.

Yes: I see I did suggest Hooker; and I have now recovered the point of view which suggested him, and I am willing to keep him; but if we cannot get Goodwin in without parting with the "Judicious" let him go.

For the door[2]—

Origen

Athanasius Augustine.

[1] For statues in the chapel.

[2] The door of the main entrance to the chapel. The scroll in Augustine's hand bears one of Dale's favourite mottoes: "Da quod jubes et jube quod vis." ("Give what Thou biddest, and bid what Thou wilt.")

6th June 1889.

As I understand, the stone platform is provided for in the contract. What is *necessary*, as it seems to me, is a very simple Communion table, and a chair and reading-desk. If the wall at the end of the chapel requires some treatment, I think that temporarily, at least, some very inexpensive method might be adopted which would suggest that it is provisional. I had the impression that part of the platform was intended for the choir, and am not sure how this is to be carried out, if the canopied stalls are adopted as shown in the plan.

What I feel is this: with a possible expenditure of £45,000 we have . . . £38,500 in round figures. This leaves £6500 to be got between now and October. Accept the canopied-stall proposal, and we throw up the amount to £7000; and my own impression is that an unnecessary expenditure of this magnitude will do us harm—and ought to do us harm. It's pleasant to wear diamonds if we can pay for them; but not if we have to run into debt for them.

26th June 1889.

I was dismayed when Albert Spicer told me that it was proposed to put the pulpit at the corner of the platform. I always understood that we were to have a desk in the middle at the front, and that for the Communion service it would be pushed aside. For us to have a pulpit so placed as to leave the "altar" visible to the congregation is nothing less than a scandal; and to put the preacher to speak cross-wise for the sake of this is not only to dishonour the function of preaching but to impair its efficiency.

5th July 1889.

If it is quite certain that the voice cannot be heard except from the corner, *cadit quaestio;* but it is a miserable humiliation that we have not been able to build a little place like that fit for its main purpose. I wonder what would be said of architect and building committee, if after they had erected a concert hall, a fiddler could be heard only when he stood in a corner.

31st January 1889.

I will come to Oxford before very long. I can very fully sympathise with your feeling of loneliness and unshared re-

sponsibility. But that is the fate, my dear friend, of most men who are charged with special work which leads them into new and unknown regions; and while there is something depressing in the solitude, there is something exhilarating in the consciousness which expresses itself in "God and I are alive."

18th July 1889.

If there is a lunch [at the opening of the college buildings] it ought to be in the hands of the Building Committee. . . . I have a strong dislike to inviting second-rate, third-rate statesmen. Playfair, I thought of, on educational grounds only. —— or —— would be a fly in the pot of ointment. Nor indeed do I care to have statesmen at all. What have we to do with them or they with us? If the troubles had not come, we might have invited Mr. Gladstone; but even four years ago I should have felt that such an invitation would have been undesirable. There is a want of self-respect in asking such men to come. And to have —— or —— would be still more humiliating. Don't imagine that this is any fresh feeling of mine. Years ago I felt a kind of scorn for this kind of thing when it happened with us. It is petty toadying; and —— and —— are such very small toads.

21st July 1889.

Thanks for your letter. We are well rid of the politicians. I am afraid that it would not occur to the ordinary worldly mind that we had invited them to do *them* good. It certainly would not occur to them.

17th October 1889.

In the hurry of Tuesday and Wednesday I had no opportunity of saying what I want to say about your address on Tuesday morning. With all my heart I thank God for the grace that was given you. You will have heard much from others about its power and brilliance; but for me these were not its chief merits. It would have been so easy to make a mistake. Some fault of temper was almost inevitable—but there was none. It was more than all that those who love you best and care most for Mansfield hoped for. And now I trust that in the quieter work the same full and abundant blessing of God may rest on you. I could not help saying this.

To the Rev. Dr. Fisher

14th April 1890.

It was a very great pleasure to me to receive your letter and to find that my deliverance at the opening of Mansfield had secured the approval of one for whose judgment I have so great a respect. It was a memorable time; how I wish that you had been there! And everything is going as well as it could go—excepting that we sorely need a much larger income. The success of the chapel services surprises us. The men whom we are receiving as students are, for the most part, able and earnest; and they are all far in advance educationally of the run of candidates for our ministry for many years past. Fairbairn's energy and fire are wonderful; but I sometimes tremble for him. God has given him many things, but has withheld that kind of wisdom which would restrain his work within reasonable limits. . . . Hatch's death was a great loss every way—specially great to us at Mansfield. He was the man in the university on whom we could most rely. He spoke to me of the sermon, as I came out of the pulpit, with an emotion that touched me a great deal.

To the Rev. Dr. Fairbairn

[1890?]

[I have desired for some time to withdraw from the Chairmanship, and have come to the] conclusion that Mackennal would be the best man [to take my place]. There are very many reasons for this. He is younger than I am; he has great influence with our people, and especially with those of them who can do most to help us; and he has more mental flexibility than I have, and would, I think, be more likely than I am to work Mansfield in the lines in which it is destined to go; he would do it, I mean, with more of prescient sympathy. His affection and regard for you, though not greater than mine, would ensure his working with you very happily and harmoniously. These are some of the grounds on which I want to see him in the Chair; it is a matter of which I have thought a good deal during the last six months. Now my friends are so kind that they would, I know, be unwilling to propose a change; and they may be even reluctant to accept one. But if you and I are agreed we can carry it, and it promises much for Mansfield.

14th June 1894.

Thank you very much for your affectionate letter. It is absolutely clear to me—and has been for a long time—that it was necessary for me to resign my responsibilities in connection with Mansfield; but when it was done I felt like a man who has lost a limb—there was a great deal less of me.

I appreciate very gratefully your desire to invent some position for me by which I might be retained in visible connection with the college; but I do not think it possible; I take the will for the deed. I cannot imagine any post which it would become the college to create for a person like myself.

CHAPTER XX

THE DISCIPLINE OF SORROW

Management of the church—Mr. Mander's impressions—Pastoral oversight—A life of labour—Methods of work—Preparation and delivery of sermons—A Birmingham presentation—The Glasgow degree—The D.D. and LL.D. degrees—Death of his brother—Death of his youngest daughter—Letters in sorrow—Illness and recovery—Miscellaneous letters.

THE preceding chapters of this book have been concerned almost entirely with Dale's public activity; a few words should be said about the personal side of his work. The letters which for the sake of convenience have been collected at the end of this chapter, tell their own story with sufficient clearness. But it may be well to point out one or two facts that might otherwise escape notice.

It is often assumed that ministers of prominence and power are exempt from the difficulties and annoyances that beset their less successful brethren; that they can take their own course in the direction of church affairs, and can disregard the prejudices and the whims—and even the convictions—of church officers and church members. A strong man, no doubt, can force his way through obstacles if he so chooses, but by doing so he will not strengthen the life of his church, nor will he increase his influence for good. His people will give way; but acquiescence is not sympathy, and they will do grudgingly what they might have done with cheerfulness and enthusiasm. Dale had learnt from his earlier experience how much may be effected by patience and conciliation. Even in matters about which he greatly cared he was willing to wait—to wait for years if needs be. Ten

years he did not think too long, if he could bring the church to do what he felt to be the right thing and to do it in the right way. And while he was not to be turned from his course in what touched the substance of his preaching, he was always ready to explain the principles by which he was guided, and in the details of the service to meet, so far as he could, the wishes of those to whom he ministered. If it happened, as it often did, that the objection or the demand was unreasonable, he did his best to conciliate where concession was impossible.

Mr. Mander, who was one of his deacons for forty years, points out some of the secrets of his success.

Mr. E. Mander.

His wisdom was conspicuous in the government of the church. Among nine hundred and more members there are sure to be some more or less awkward to manage. He allowed more freedom of discussion than we had been used to. He listened to suggestions with a willing ear. He encouraged speech among those who had long been silent. He was easy of access, and able to see imperfections if pointed out by another. All these things may account for the unbroken harmony which prevailed through so many years. He ruled indeed, but it was in the same manner as the gracious lady described by Pope—who

> If she rules him never shows she rules ;
> Charms by accepting ; by submitting sways.

. . . I loved him for his charity. I was struck by it first of all in his treatment of the poor when coming into the church. To the surprise of some, but to the delight of nearly all, no distinction was made between those who came from wealthy and those from lowly dwellings. The poor were never reminded of their poverty and the hindrances it placed in their way, nor the rich—when there happened to be such—of the more abundant service they could render. The difference between the two classes never appeared to be recognised.

The importance that he attached to the pastoral relation grew with years. To see much of his people in their homes as they became more and more widely dispersed, was altogether beyond his power. But he was regularly to be found in his vestry at Carr's Lane on fixed evenings to see any one who wished to consult him ; and those who

wrote to him never failed to receive an answer. Indeed, he did much by his letters to keep up intimate relations with many members of the church and with others who had left the town and had passed away into churches elsewhere. His letters were often brief, but they always had a word of exhortation, encouragement, or consolation for the inner life. In later as in earlier years, he could break through the reserve which he never wholly lost, more easily in writing than in speech; and those to whom he wrote very often came closer to him than those whom he met and talked with every day.

Work on such a scale, so continuous, so many-sided, could not have been accomplished without system and rule, or without sacrifice. Dale took life seriously: he was severe with himself, and resolutely turned his back on many pleasant things that he might give himself to duty without reserve. In 1868, when he was beginning to feel the increasing pressure of public work, he removed from Calthorpe Road, where he had been living for several years after Mr. James's death, to Winterslow House[1] in the Bristol Road. His new home was larger and more convenient than the old. It had a pleasant garden with fields beyond. But it was not this that drew him there. It lessened his distractions. Calthorpe Road was too accessible to the casual caller, and it was not always easy to refuse to see those who came, even if the business that brought them was of trivial importance. As he grew older he hardened his heart, and during the morning hours his study was obdurately closed against intrusion. But he found it unpleasant to give offence to people who did not understand that serious work cannot be put aside and taken up again at pleasure, and he determined to protect himself by other means. Bristol Road lay remote from the main current of social life, and with the change the number of callers was lessened by at least a half.

The afternoon was spent as a rule in committees. The

[1] Winterslow, on the edge of Salisbury Plain, had been the early home of Mrs. Dale's father. The little inn there, Winterslow Hut, was a favourite resort of William Hazlitt and his friends.

evening, if free from public engagements, was jealously reserved for study. He dined early until his doctors ordered him to change his way of living, and his habit was to work for three hours before supper and for another hour or more after it. Very rarely would he consent to dine out. He saw his friends either at the Club in the interval between one engagement and another, or more frequently in business and in council. It was only now and then that he allowed himself to break through his rule, or that the welcome visit of a friend warranted an evening's leisure. But he did not lose his taste for society, and revelled in freedom when it came.

Even this rigid self-denial, this strenuous thrift of time, would not have carried him through his work without method and the faculty, sedulously cultivated, of commanding his whole intellectual force at will. Rapidity of work, within certain limits, he regarded as essential to efficiency. To spend three hours on a task that could be done in two, and well done, he held to be not only a waste of time but injurious to the mind. Another habit saved him much labour. He refers to it in his lectures to the students at Yale.

> Always have your note-sheets on your desk. Whatever you are reading — theology, philosophy, history, poetry, fiction, biography, science—may at any moment give you something that will be of use in the pulpit. Sometimes you will get a subject for a sermon, sometimes a strong, epigrammatic statement of a great ethical truth which you will be glad to quote, sometimes a felicitous illustration. Do not be satisfied with recording a mere reference to the page of the book where you have found anything that you mean to use, or with simply indicating the subject or the line of thought which the book has suggested. Develop the illustration so that it may be almost ready to be transferred to your sermon when you want it. Indicate in your "notes" briefly, but distinctly, how the subject, or the line of thought, which has occurred to you should be treated. Write out the sentence at length which you mean to quote, and as you write it, you will probably think of an effective "setting" for it—something will occur to you that will naturally lead up to it. . . .
>
> Read the Bible, as well as other books, with your note-sheets at hand. . . . Half an hour's reading will often give you the

substance of three or four sermons. Instead of hunting for a text or a subject when Sunday is coming near, you will only have to turn to the drawer in which your notes are kept, and you will find a score of sermons half ready. Two or three sets of notes will sometimes run naturally together into one discourse, and in using them you will have hardly anything to do except to prepare an introduction and a conclusion. Sometimes such light and fire will suddenly flash out of a sentence or a phrase that a whole sermon will come to you at once, and you will be able to transfer to your notes the rough outline of an effective discourse.[1]

This reference to pulpit work brings to mind Dale's method of preparation. One must distinguish—and the distinction has been often disregarded — between the sermons delivered on special occasions and the sermons preached to his own people in the ordinary course of his ministry; for although the substance of his thought served him for both purposes, the form of it was almost always modified according to the circumstances of time and place. The outline of his sermons was carefully prepared, but it was seldom that the sermons preached at Carr's Lane were written in full. Only a part—sometimes three-quarters, sometimes a half—is to be found in the manuscript. The opening passages are the most complete: almost invariably, after the middle of the discourse is reached, the notes become briefer; a sentence stands for a paragraph, and towards the close a sentence is represented only by a word. In dealing with complex subjects he wrote, of course, at greater length; but even then he often broke away from the manuscript into unpremeditated speech, in which thought and feeling took shape as they came. It was a dangerous habit, for sometimes he swamped the effect of his careful meditation with a sudden torrent of eloquence, the rushing splendour of which was remembered long after the rest of the discourse had been forgotten. On special occasions—and it was then that his ways were observed and criticised—he wrote the whole except the conclusion in full, and read his sermon from the manuscript without disguise, shifting the little sheets from left to right as he proceeded.

[1] *Lectures on Preaching*, pp. 119, 120.

But whether he wrote at length or not, he never failed to prepare himself carefully before entering the pulpit; and careful preparation means conscientious work.

One precaution in his activity he carefully observed—to have always on hand, even in the study, two very different forms of work. Variety, he found, kept the mind from staleness and from strain. And, so far as he could, he arranged to combine work that was a trouble with work that was a pleasure, so giving free play to natural tastes and powers, and also correcting intellectual defects at the same time. Such methods when described must seem to be mechanical; but they are less so in experience than in description. All habit is mechanical in a greater or a less degree; its value is that it enables us to do instinctively what would otherwise involve deliberate effort. It economises energy. And in this discipline of the intellectual powers the process that is conscious in its beginning soon becomes a habit and establishes itself in the character.

His life had been singularly laborious. He had spent his strength without reserve in the service of the church, the city, and the nation. Now, after many years of devotion, he received more than one welcome tribute of public gratitude. After he retired from the School Board in 1880, his friends in Birmingham presented him with a costly bookcase filled with books of his own choosing; and the sincerity and affection of the speeches at the presentation were even more precious to him than the magnificent heirloom.[1] Eighteen months later, the University of Glasgow, during Mr. Bright's Lord-Rectorship, made him a Doctor of Laws. The honour gave him real pleasure, and the title was one that he had no scruple in using. He gave the following account of the ceremony of admission:—

[1] The bookcase bears the following inscription:—Presented to Robert William Dale, M.A., by a few of his fellow-townsmen on the occasion of his retirement from the School Board, in token of their appreciation of eminent services rendered by him to the cause of liberty and progress and to every department of the public life of this town. Birmingham, 1881.

To his Wife

Glasgow, *23rd March* 1883.

The installation was a very fine affair. I went up to the University at a quarter to eleven, and met the other men who were to have the Degree, and the Professors. They had carriages to drive us down to St. Andrew's Hall. I went down with Burn, the Tutor of Trinity.[1] At the Hall we were put into our gowns —black—and the red hood was put on to our arms to carry. Bright was grand in his robes—black silk and gold. The Hall is an immense place. The body was filled with students with red and blue caps—red Liberal, blue Conservative. The platform was occupied with Professors and other great people, the galleries with visitors. They said that there were 5000 or 6000 people in the Hall. When Bright came in he had a wonderful reception. Then Caird[2] read a Latin prayer which the students cheered. Bright was made doctor first; then the rest of us. The Dean made a little Latin speech about each of us; then Caird put the velvet cap for a moment on the top of our head; then the Janitor put the hood over our shoulders. The Liberal students gave me a very hearty cheer. You have seen Bright's address; there were fine passages in it, but it was not the old Bright. We were driven back to the University and lunched. I had a pleasant time. I sat next Dr. Dixon, one of the Professors, and Lord Shand, a Scotch Judge. . . . I am going to see Bright receive the Freedom of the City this morning, and dine at Dr. Goodrich's this evening.

To Mr. E. A. Lawrence

31st July 1893.

Your letter[3] . . . would, I think, give an inaccurate impression of the reason why I have not used my Yale degree. It was not because it came from America, but because I have a sentimental objection — perhaps it is something more — to Divinity degrees. If it had been a Doctorship of Laws I should have used it as I use my Glasgow degree.[4] My American friends

[1] The Rev. Robert Burn, formerly Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge; author of *Rome and the Campagna*.

[2] The Rev. John Caird, D.D., Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glasgow.

[3] The letter was not published.

[4] "I have no scruples about the LL.D. as I had about the D.D.; and though 'Mr.' is more after my manner, I shall yield to my friends and be Dr. R. W. Dale."—To Dr. Guinness Rogers.

have been rather pained by my not using it, and they have been pained because they thought that I did not value it because it was American. I have tried to remove this error, but, I am afraid, not very successfully.

Soon after these honours came a dark and stormy time which left a lasting scar upon Dale's life. Early in the summer of 1883, his only brother, Thomas Dale, died at Cambridge after a few days' illness. He had taken a high degree—third wrangler—in the Mathematical Tripos of 1862. He was elected to a Trinity Fellowship, and settled at Cambridge, where he won a considerable reputation as a "coach" and as a college lecturer. He lived with his pupils: it was his habit to spend even his vacations with some of them at the English Lakes or in Wales; and he took no part—so engrossed was he in his own work — in college or university administration. But latterly he had been drawn out of his seclusion. He had given up his pupils, and had made his influence felt in the reorganisation of the educational system in his own college. He was in fact just entering upon an entirely new field of usefulness, developing qualities, especially in debate, with which he had never been credited. Dale had always loved him with more than a brother's tenderness; and his pride was as strong as his affection.

The letters that passed between Dale and his brother were almost all destroyed at this time. Nothing remains that would serve to illustrate the growth of affection or to indicate the nature of the influence which each exerted on the other. All that can be said is that their intimacy was close and unbroken. But widely separated as they were in age, they had none of those early associations —the "bright hours," the "blissful dreams"[1]—on which

[1] This phrase of Keble's recalls the fact that the stanzas in which it occurs (S. Andrew's Day, "When brothers part for manhood's race") were among Dale's favourite passages. The last stanza—quoted in an address on "Friendship" only a few weeks before his death—had come to have a personal note for him:—

That so, before the judgment-seat,
Though changed and glorified each face,
Not unremembered ye may meet,
For endless ages to embrace.

memory delights in later years to dwell. One letter—the only one available—suggests rather than expresses the depth and the strength of their brotherly love.

To Mr. Thomas Dale

10th December 1879.

It is not very easy to believe that I was fifty last week; it is still harder to believe that you will be forty to-morrow. But I suppose it is true, and it is a great thing to have forty years behind you, without any great catastrophe and shame. As time goes on, I think I feel more and more vividly a sense of relief when those I love are safely through another year: the sense of relief is still keener in relation to myself, for I suppose every man thinks his own perils greatest. The ice cracks in such unexpected places—the ship is so apt to strike on rocks when the chart gave no warning of them—that mere safety seems to me a much greater reason for thankfulness than it used to be. To do some great thing is the craving of early ambition; to do quiet duty honestly and without serious falls satisfies the heart when youth disappears. We both have reason to rejoice in the humbler satisfaction; and we both have reason to be grateful for many years of work which has been honourable as well as useful, and which has brought with it many pleasures.

For you I trust that there are reserved "many happy returns" of to-morrow. I still cherish my old hope that you will be able before long to see your way to lessening your work, or rather, to changing it. A man should try, if he can—and you have the power—to do a little piece of fresh work, and to leave something bearing the image of his mind behind him.

We are all hoping to see you soon.

The possibility of outliving his brother had never occurred to Dale's mind. He saw him in his last illness, and only two or three days before the end, without any grave alarm. When he was told that his brother was dead, he could hardly believe it. The loss—so sudden, so unforeseen—absolutely crushed him. He seemed like a great tree torn up by an autumn gale and clinging to the earth with only half its roots. He poured out his sorrow to his more intimate friends with unwonted unreserve.

TO THE REV. DR. WESTCOTT[1]

3rd July 1883.

I am very grateful to you for your kind words about my brother and for your friendly sympathy. He had a high esteem for you, and to him your recognition of his power and worth, and your respect for his memory—could he have anticipated them—would have been very precious. They are precious to me.

It has been a time of great agony. I have not been disciplined to die, and a great part of all that I was seems to have died in him. For a time I had no relief; but at last in the depth of my anguish Christ revealed to me in quite a new way that He is my brother's Brother and mine. It is in the eternal commonplaces of the Faith that all strength lies, and all consolation and all hope. Other forms of comfort have followed the first.

TO THE REV. DR. GUINNESS ROGERS

June 1883.

. . . One element of great sadness comes from my feeling that he was just entering a new and in some respects larger life, in which his power and his knowledge would have produced wider and deeper effects. At my earnest solicitation he had gradually withdrawn himself from private pupils—over whom, however, he had in many cases exerted a most admirable influence—and he had begun to make himself felt in college affairs. His great personal force, his fearlessness and tenacity, had just carried through important reforms in the educational organisation of Trinity, and the chief reliance of those who had followed his lead was in his vigour and courage for putting the reforms into practice. I have little doubt that in a very short time his power would have extended from Trinity to the University generally and would have been altogether beneficial. I was hoping, too, that with his escape from the heavy pressure of coaching he would begin to make use of his historical knowledge, which in some directions was very rich and minute, and had been so mastered that he had formed clear and definite judgments of a kind likely to provoke interesting thought.

But it is all over. I had thought of him as likely to care for my wife when I am gone, and to be a second father to my

[1] Then Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, now Lord Bishop of Durham.

children, of whom he was very fond. He has been very much to me, not only in affection but in making whole provinces of life mine which but for him would have been very remote. The future seems narrower as well as darker and colder. It was what I had never thought of. Always I had taken it for granted that he would be near me as long as I lived. Death has come to me rarely; I am not disciplined to bear it. God help me!

To the Rev. Dr. Crosskey

4th July 1883.

Your letter has deeply moved me. Had I replied to it at once it would have been with tears, not with words. The trouble is a very great one: a great part of my life seems to have suddenly fallen away. For many years he was rather a son than a brother, and as he gradually became the able and accomplished man he was, much of the special tenderness of the old relationship continued to blend with the proud and more robust affection of the new. We were never estranged even for a moment. He loved my children and my wife, and so new elements of tenderness were added to those which bound us more directly to each other.

For two or three days the darkness was deep, and the agitation and writhing and distress had no relief. The relief began to come with a new and more vivid revelation of the brotherhood of Christ. In my agony there came a blessed discovery of the passion and depth of His love for us—for He is my brother's Brother and mine. Since then, and through Him who in so many ways is the Resurrection and the Life, there has gradually come a sense, at times vivid and animating, of the larger life into which he has entered. But the clouds return, and often they are very dark.

Everything I hear from Cambridge confirms my own impression that he was just making his strength felt in the organisation and government of his college, and that ten years more of life would have enabled him to do a work which would have had immense and beneficent influence. . . .

This is very bitter. It is sad to look on unaccomplished work. And yet I ought to believe—and sometimes do—that the share of service God had given him to do was done, and that it was well for him to begin other service elsewhere. But one side of life has become quite dark for me. My other brothers died in childhood before he was born. I never had a sister. God has given me much love of other kinds—but the

heart aches for what is lost and can never come back. We shall be restored to each other, but under other conditions; the old affection will be transfigured, but it will not be the same. We cling to the life that now is as well as to the life that is to come.

Writing to his friend Mr. Lawrence, who conducted the funeral service at Birmingham, he gave a sketch of his brother's life and character, adding one or two fresh details.

To Mr. E. A. Lawrence

30th June 1883.

. . . You did not know my brother. He was a man of remarkable vigour of character as well as of great mental force and high accomplishment. He had a deep and serious loyalty to Christ. There was a generous devotion in him to his work and his pupils, to whom he was exceedingly kind, and some of whom—the most brilliant—had a great affection for him. . . . He was originally a Congregationalist, and became a member of a Congregational church when very young; but he saw an ugly side of our church life in London, and became a Churchman soon after going to Cambridge. . . .

I thought that you would like to know these things. Of course we do not want an address, but I like to have some knowledge of the dead as well as the living for my prayer.

The strain through which he passed affected his health; he could not abandon his work, but he found the burden of it to be almost intolerable. Before he recovered, a fresh calamity overtook him. His youngest daughter Claire, a girl of eighteen, showed symptoms of lung disease, and it was found necessary to send her to Bournemouth out of the bleak and bitter climate of Birmingham. She was away from home for several weeks, and unfortunately the arrangements made for her comfort were not satisfactory. She became worse; her mother was sent for; the original complaint was complicated by other ailments; for three weeks she lay in a critical condition. Dale himself was too ill to leave home, and anxiety for his child told upon him with serious effect. His letters written during this period of suspense reflect from day to

day every alternation of hope and fear. The east wind terrifies him. A burst of warmth and sunshine revives his courage. He passes at a bound from one extreme to the other. At last the child was brought home to wait for death; the waiting was not long. While the shadow impended, Dale had to fulfil an engagement to preach the annual sermon for the London Missionary Society during the May Meetings. He preached, with a supreme effort, but upheld by a strength greater than his own. His letter to Dr. Mackennal was in reply to an expression of sympathy assuring him that in his weakness he had touched men's hearts more closely than in the time of his strength. When the end came, he was ill and confined to his bed, but he was able to cross the landing and to be with the child at the last.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

14th May 1884.

You will be grieved to hear that the doctors take the gloomiest views concerning the future of my darling. I know of another future which lies beyond them, and this is very bright. But if we lose her much of the sunshine and brightness will pass out of life.

16th May 1884.

You will be grieved to hear that my darling seems to make no progress. Pray for her—pray for me—for my dear wife who is heart-broken. All things are possible to God, who is more truly her Father than I am. I thought that I had finally parted with her to Christ, and the surrender was accepted; and yet as I told the people on Wednesday, I have fellowship with Him, and what is His is still mine and more truly mine than ever, and securely. It may be He will see well to spare her to me for a time.

To the Rev. Dr. Mackennal

18th May 1884.

My brethren are so kind to me in this time of trouble that I ought to have a strong faith in the tenderness of the Divine love. The children cannot be better than the Father. God

who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust will not think hardly of me for it, but both in preparing the sermon for Wednesday and in delivering it my heart was filled with thought and solicitude for my sick child, which almost drove out the solicitude I ought to have felt for God's great work and human redemption. . . . It was very good of you to write. I am very grateful.

To the Rev. Dr. Guinness Rogers

8th June 1884.

My darling Claire went to her true home on Friday morning at a quarter past six. She was conscious almost to the last; she suffered very little. I said to her a little before six, "Christ is with you and loves you, my darling"; and she gave the prompt, sharp nod which was characteristic of her. I have had a far more vivid sense of her presence with Him than of her departure from us. God has been very good. Mrs. Dale and the girls are bearing up bravely.

To the Rev. Dr. Fisher[1]

13*th October* 1884.

Your very kind letter has touched me deeply. A great sorrow brings with it wonderful discoveries of the tenderness, depth, and constancy of human affection, and therefore of the infinite love of God; for man is the image of God, and all that is most gracious in man reveals God. That with three thousand miles of ocean between us you should sympathise with me in my trouble, brings home to me afresh the unity of those who are in Christ—their unity in Him. The loss of my child was a great blow. She always seemed to me one of those elect children of God who are unsoiled by contact with the world. With a frank delight in all pleasant things there was an undefinable freedom from all touch of what our fathers called worldliness. But though for a time the agony of suspense was hard to bear, God taught me that she was His rather than mine, and mine for ever because she was His. He taught me this some weeks before He called her to His side, and this gave peace. When she went home the peace became a joy, though the joy could not extinguish the grief.

[1] Of New Haven, Connecticut.

For several weeks after this fresh bereavement Dale continued in a state of profound prostration, and as the summer advanced his condition became alarming. Signs of serious trouble appeared, and his doctors saw reason to believe that he was menaced by organic disease of an incurable kind. They sent him to be examined by Sir Henry Thompson who, to his relief and amazement, assured him—"with the most emphatic reiteration" and "with a confidence as great as that of twenty popes"—that he was organically sound, and that his illness was the accidental result of the distress through which he had been passing, combined with the exhausted state in which the distress found him. He was ordered to give up active work for a time, but to take heart and to look forward with confidence to the future. Fortified with this assurance, he soon began to regain his strength; and after three months' absence he returned home early in September, with his sorrow in some measure assuaged by the sympathy that he had received from all who knew him, and with renewed hope in the possibility of public service.

To Mr. George Dixon

3rd September 1884.

I found your very kind note waiting for me when I reached home yesterday morning; it was one of many pleasant welcomes back to work. The sorrow and the prostration of strength which compelled me to leave Birmingham for three months have been the occasion for innumerable manifestations of affection. There is something more than comradeship among those who work together in public affairs in this dear town. From men of all creeds and both political parties as well as from my own church I have received proofs of sympathy which have touched me very deeply. . . . Whether I have really recovered my normal strength can be tested only by work. I mean to be wary until I am sure. But I see no reason to suppose that I shall have to give up *much* of my work. I may not be able to speak and preach as much away from home, and may have to diminish my literary work for a time; but I trust that this will prove the limit of what prudence will require.

In course of time his interest in public affairs revived, and, as we have seen, he took his part in the struggles of the two eventful years that followed. But the delight of battle was dying within him; and when the crisis came and brought disruption to the Liberal party, after doing what he could to heal the division, he withdrew from the agitation and the conflict of politics with a sense of relief not unmixed with regret.

The following letters illustrate some of the characteristics referred to in this chapter. They are arranged according to subjects and not in order of time; and a few written at a later period have been placed here for special reasons.

TO THE REV. DR. WESTCOTT

30th October 1883.

Many weeks ago, while the distress of my brother's death was still fresh, you were good enough to send me your *Commentary on the Epistles of St. John.* Now that I have read the volume I feel that I cannot adequately express my sense of its value. Some time ago I began to read Haupt, and, though I agree with you that he has great merits, I felt that he did too little for me to incline me to read him through. You will receive from other men, whose judgment is much better worth considering than mine, testimonies to the greatness of the service which you have rendered to the Church both in this volume and in your Commentary on the Gospel; but none can be more grateful for it.

I should have been glad, if I may presume to say so, to see a fuller development of your conception of the objective aspects of our Lord's sacrifice than you have given in either of the two Commentaries. In the Commentary on the Gospel I remember that there is a passage in which you say, truly enough, that John dwells more on the subjective than on the objective aspects of it; but there are two or three passages in the First Epistle—especially ii. 2, on which you have an "additional note"—which are very remarkable; and I should have felt very grateful for a fuller account of what you think John meant by describing our Lord as an "Advocate" and as a "Propitiation." I am not at all clear that in 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, to which you

refer, the meaning is that man's hostility to God is removed. The passage in Matt. v. 24—though the word is different—points, I think, to another meaning: to be reconciled to our brother is for the offender to remove the resentment of the offended person—not to lay aside his own resentment.

I am the more anxious to see a full investigation of this subject by yourself, because I believe that the solution—as far as it can be solved—of the question, why "the blood of Christ" avails objectively for the remission of sins, is to be found in that mystical relation between Christ and Humanity which is realised in the Church, to which your mind has been so strongly drawn. I had some glimpse of this eight or nine years ago when I published a volume of lectures on the Atonement; I think I see it much more clearly now, and if I had to write the lectures again, I should endeavour to insist more earnestly on the necessity of reaching the objective aspect of the Death of Christ through the subjective. In experience and life the objective must, I think, as a rule be believed first: in theory it is reached last.

Excuse me for troubling you with so long a letter; it is rather an ungracious return for your kindness.

Cannot you prevail on the Bishop of Durham[1] to give us another book? If he had not been made a bishop we should have had two or three books from him by this time. His silence gives us Congregationalists another argument against Episcopacy.

26th May 1883.

I was unwilling to acknowledge the copy of *The Historic Faith* which you were good enough to send me until I had read it. Had I acknowledged it at once, it would have been with the warmth of gratitude I feel for your earlier works; now that I have read it, my gratitude is still more cordial. I was delighted to see that you had resigned your Canonry with the intention of securing more time for your professorship; for I hoped that this meant *more books;* but the delight was checked by the remembrance that it is to the Canonry that we owe *The Historic Faith.*

You may not be much in the way of hearing with what affection and honour you are regarded by Nonconformists. There are very many of them to whom your two books on the Resurrection and your *John* are priceless.

Forgive me for saying—do not let them make you a bishop. I do not know what Dr. Lightfoot may have done for Durham;

[1] Dr. Lightfoot.

for those of us who are outside he has done nothing since his elevation. It is the extinction of a sun; let us hope it is only an eclipse.

7th April 1890.

I should like to tell you—though you do not need to be told—that you will go to Durham[1] with the prayers of many that are outside the Church of England that you may have all the grace and light and strength that your new responsibilities will make necessary. Among those who have received the eternal life which God gave us in His Son, there is something more than that solidarity of which our French neighbours have spoken, and in which you have long seen something deeper and more wonderful than the men who gave the word its vogue suspected. And you have done so much for many of us of whom you know nothing, that you may be certain that in your new work you will have the sympathy and intercession of those who are "scattered abroad" in many churches and in many lands. They will give God thanks for your success in the higher provinces of life as they give God thanks for their own.

To Mr. E. A. Lawrence

19th January 1885.

It is a hard question, but easier to answer in practice than in a formula.

People want to be comforted—ought we to comfort them? or ought we to lecture to them on Congregational principles in which they find no comfort? This is, in substance, what you ask. You add by way of comment that they are "in no special sorrow." But that comment is precisely the critical point; and I imagine that most of us have so preached the gospel that men and women, though "in no special sorrow," need consolation—really need it, and do not merely long for it. I came to that conclusion some years ago, but have never been able to amend my ways as I wish. I try, and sometimes have a partial success; but the success is only partial. Four or five months ago, I preached a sermon on *Rest in the Lord*, and began to think I had found the track; but if I did, I lost it again. Last Sunday week I preached on "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." That, I think, was still nearer to the right thing; but I cannot keep it up.

[1] After his appointment to the Bishopric of Durham.

Has it ever occurred to you that Justification has lost its great place among us? Depend upon it, Luther was right in insisting on its supreme importance. It appears to me that I rarely use the word; and although it is quite true, as I think I have said in my lectures on the Ephesians, that Paul could make a great statement of the breadth and power of the Christian Redemption without using it, he had the conception for which the word stands wrought into the substance of his life and thought: I fear that I have been sparing of the word because I have not grasped the thing. It has come to me of late, with much vividness and force; I wonder whether it will remain and grow. It lies in immediate and vital contact with the Atonement.

. . . I keep very well when I do not work on Saturday, and am beginning to think that the old-fashioned people were right who insisted on the perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment.

To the Rev. F. H. Stead

13th September 1886.

Do not be out of heart with regard to Gallowtree Gate. Carr's Lane is much farther from the wealthier suburbs of Birmingham than Gallowtree Gate can be from the wealthier parts of Leicester; and Birmingham is now encircled with Congregational chapels. The number of people we have sent out during the last twenty years has been immense. When young people marry and begin to have children, they cannot come in, and we nearly always lose them; and the supply of new people is largely cut off by the suburban chapels. But I think that our congregations are better than they have been at any time for the last twenty years. The evening congregation is certainly better, and the morning has not suffered much. After talking to the people about it, at every fair opportunity, for ten years, I induced them two years and a half ago to throw open the chapel at night every Sunday—"no reserved seats." The success of the change has been decisive. Even financially there has been no loss. Some people, I believe, gave up their sittings because they could not have them reserved in the evening; but they were very few. Working people who cannot come out in the morning are, I think, ceasing to take sittings. But the increase of the weekly offering, which we now collect from pew to pew at both services, has more than compensated for the loss.

Be of good courage. If a man has anything to say from God to the people, they will come to hear him, and their hearts

will be touched. What he has to say on his own account they will not care for very long, unless he is a man of a million; and even then their interest in his preaching is comparatively languid.

To the Rev. S. March

5th May 1885.

Our rule for many years has been to withhold the vote from all Church members under twenty-one, and I am completely satisfied of its wisdom and justice. In my judgment there ought to be nothing in the organisation of a church to prevent it from receiving into membership all those of whose love for Christ it is completely assured; but to entrust the control of church affairs to children of twelve or thirteen is obviously irrational. It is a function which they are unable to discharge. A church does not entrust all its members with the function of leading prayer and teaching: those who are best qualified for these functions are entrusted with them. Why should it entrust with the function of voting those who are obviously unfit? To vote is to discharge a duty rather than to exercise a right; I regard it as a responsibility rather than a privilege; and the responsibility should not rest on those who are plainly incapable of discharging it.

It may be said that there are persons above twenty-one who are also unfit for this trust; but the normal condition of a Christian man or woman above the age of twenty-one is such as to carry with it the qualification for deciding broadly as to what is the mind of Christ on the questions submitted to a church. To remove from the voting register those over twenty-one who are not qualified, to place on it those under twenty-one who are qualified, would be impossible proceedings.

I think that the law should be prospective, and should not disqualify any at present voting.

To the Rev. C. Leach

18th October 1886.

I know nothing of the Hanover Road congregation and cannot, therefore, form any judgment on its claims. But there are plainly very strong reasons why you should remain in Birmingham.

(1) You have created a congregation: are you sure that it has yet acquired those elements of solidity and strength which would enable it to meet, without peril, the strain which would

be imposed on it by your removal? When a nail is driven in, a good workman clenches it. There is something less exhilarating in disciplining and educating a congregation than in gathering it; but I am not sure that we have a right to choose the most exciting kind of work.

(2) You have a position here, and the elements of power in it you can measure; the confidence of your brethren, and of your people, and a considerable following in the town. These you lose, and to win corresponding force elsewhere will be a work of time.

(3) You know that the people of Birmingham will listen to you week after week; you cannot tell, till you have tried, whether it will be the same anywhere else.

Mr. James used to tell me that when he was very much inclined to leave Birmingham, Mrs. James said to him, "Never you leave till you see your way out of Birmingham as clearly as you saw your way into it." That seemed to me wholesome advice. It has helped to keep me here.

But I believe that God whom we serve grants us clear guidance when our only desire is to do the work that He wants us to do, and to do it where He wants us to do it. To Him I commend you.

To Miss Frances Power Cobbe

21st October 1882.

Thank you very much for your kindly note and for the *Peak in Darien* which reached me yesterday.

I have read the paper on Magnanimous Atheism with great interest and with deep sympathy. Polemically, it was probably necessary to avoid the question how far our sense of Righteousness requires that in the long-run Happiness, in a high but rich and varied sense, should come to those who are loyal to the idea of Duty; but I believe in a heaven for all the capacities and faculties of human nature.

There are some striking sentences, too, in *Romola* about the moral uses of Fear.

Will you allow me to take this opportunity of expressing my obligations to you for very substantial services which you rendered to me long ago? Your *Intuitive Morals* was a favourite book of mine when I was a young man, and I have never lost my esteem for it. Among the moral duties which are very ill discharged is the duty of acknowledging the light and strength which have come to us from men and women who are personally strangers, but some of whom have done more for us than most of our

friends. We cannot give the assurance to the dead—perhaps they know it without—that they have helped us; but it seems a graceless thing to let the living miss whatever cheer and courage might come from hearing a voice out of the darkness saying, "Well done—you have given me some fresh light and fire."

To the Rev. Dr. Wace

Llandudno, *25th January* 1884.

You were good enough to send me ten days or a fortnight ago your new book about Luther. Since I have been here I have been able to read the greater part of it. The translations are most readable, and give one a fresh impression of Luther's real genius for religion—to use a modern phrase—as well as of his superhuman energy. I have not yet attacked Dr. Bucheim, but your essay has interested me greatly.

Whenever I find a man has learnt the secret which Paul, Augustine, and Luther knew, I am always conscious of a sense of brotherhood with him. The kinship is quite of another order than that which comes from identity of mere intellectual or ethical thought; and it is wonderful how the Divine light which is in a man shines through what may seem to one to be grave error in the intellectual and ethical region.

I think, however, that in your form of conceiving the truth as well as in the truth itself I am wholly with you. For purposes of historical theology I have the impression—but your knowledge of Luther's works may correct it—that sufficient importance has not been given to the relation between Luther's way of stating the doctrine of Justification by Faith and his conception of Baptism. Indulgences were meant to deal with offences committed after Baptism, which an imperfect "contrition" had not removed. Luther said: Your trouble comes from not seeing that in Baptism you received eternal life and remission of sin, and that these gifts of God are still yours: hold them fast by Faith—which with him was constantly *fiducia*—and so get the comfort and life of them. How Luther would have formulated his doctrine had he seen less power in Baptism, I cannot quite imagine. I sometimes appeal to Baptism in connection with remission of sins and all the blessings of the Christian Redemption, but in another way—a way which I suppose Mr. Maurice would have approved. I remind my congregation that Baptism was the personal, direct assurance to them that they belong to the race which is Christ's own, for which He died, which He has

redeemed, which He defends, over which He reigns; and that Redemption is therefore theirs — only they can reject and despise it. I find it very useful to talk to my children's class in this way.

If I may trouble you with a still longer letter than I have written already, I should like to tell you of something that was much in my thoughts during the recent Luther celebration. You remember the kind of criticism to which Mr. Moody was subjected nine years ago. It was said that he did not preach Repentance; taught men that they were saved by believing something, and so forth. During his present visit no such criticisms have been general. Mr. Gill, a clergyman at Lee, wrote to the *Guardian* in that strain, but his letter called out several strong protests. When Mr. Moody was in Birmingham early last year, I was struck by the change in the general tone of his preaching. He insisted very much on Repentance—and on Repentance in the sense in which the word is now used by "Evangelical" as well as other divines, as though it were a doing of penance instead of a *metanoia*—a self-torture, a voluntary sorrow, a putting on of spiritual hair-shirts.

Now observe the effect of this. He was just as earnest, as vigorous, as impressive as before. People were as deeply moved. Hundreds went into the inquiry room every night. But the results, as far as I can learn, have been inconsiderable. Evangelical clergymen, Methodists, my own friends, all tell the same story. I have seen none of the shining faces that used to come to me after his former visit. From first to last in 1875 I received about 200 Moody converts into communion, and I reckon that 75 per cent of them have stood well. As yet I have not received a dozen as the result of his last visit.

In 1875 he preached in a manner which produced the sort of effect produced by Luther, and provoked similar criticism. He exulted in the free grace of God. The grace was to lead men to repentance—to a complete change of life. His joy was contagious. Men leaped out of darkness into light, and lived a Christian life afterwards. The "do penance" preaching has had no such results. I wrote to him about it a few weeks ago. He said in reply that it had "set him a-thinking," and he wanted to talk it over with me; but I have not been able to see him. It struck me that you would be interested in this.

I congratulate you very heartily on your Principalship,[1] which, I suppose, gives you new chances of impressing on others what God has taught you. I hope that it will not stop the books. . . .

[1] Of King's College, London.

To Mr. R. H. Hutton

21st February 1885.

Allow me to thank you for the kindly article on "Christian Worldliness" in last week's *Spectator*.[1] If I had not been very much occupied all the week my virtue would perhaps have been too feeble to resist the temptation to offer some observations in reply, and to ask you to insert them. But both the questions raised in the article are really too large for discussion in the columns of a newspaper.

On the first—the correspondence between the Puritan and the Catholic idea of saintliness—two criticisms are possible, one historical and the other theological.

I should contest the truth of the traditional conception of the Puritan. Perhaps you know Dr. Halley's *Puritanism in Lancashire;* the Puritans in that county played billiards, hunted, and lived a life very remote from asceticism. But it may be fairly alleged that the type in the South was different. Take then Colonel Hutchinson, who was a fair example of the Puritan saint among educated men: he was an accomplished gentleman and passionately fond of hawking. Take John Owen: the impression one has of him is that he was a man of great physical vigour, and he appears to have had a weakness for unclerical dress of rather a showy sort. To give another test: look at the way in which a man like Baxter discusses the ethics of hunting; nothing can be more sensible or more free from a false unworldliness.

Theologically the difference between the place of suffering in the Puritan and in the Catholic ideal was very wide. The Catholic found a value in the suffering itself: it was necessary for the removal of the guilt of venial sin. The Puritan cared only for the disciplinary influence of suffering. If it came from God's hand he believed that it would be a means of grace. He had no right to inflict it on himself; if he did, he would have no right to look for the grace that would give it sanctifying power. He avoided most pleasant things, but it was because they were regarded as sinful—and many of them were in those days actually sinful, or lay in the near neighbourhood of sin. I rather doubt whether the technical idea of "worldliness" which has prevailed among the later Evangelicals had much hold on the Puritans in their best days.

On the larger question of the true Christian ideal, I suppose

[1] The *Spectator*, 14th February 1885.

that the answer comes out of the innermost life of a man, and discussion is unavailing.

It is many years since I first felt the spell of the wonderful sermon of Newman's to which you refer;[1] and when I turned to it a few months ago I found the spell still unbroken. The beauty of his vision of the saintly life is enough to tempt the angels from their thrones. There are two or three pages of that sermon which can hardly be surpassed in the prose literature of England.

But, frankly, the vision does not seem to me to have been suggested by the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, or the Epistles. What is that sentence of Bacon's—I cannot quite remember it—about the mixture of a lie always adding pleasure? I sometimes tell my people to try the health and soundness of their spiritual taste by asking whether any devotional book or life seems to them to have a fascination which they cannot find in the four Gospels. If it has, there is something wrong in it.

My faith in the Trinity and the Incarnation—where I find the roots of all ethics and of all politics, which indeed in their higher aspect are a part of ethics—prevents me from yielding to the charm of the Catholic ideal. It is in the air. It touches earth too lightly, and misses heaven. The Christian ideal is near to both and touches both. The Catholic is the old Gnosticism over again, applied to life instead of thought.

I meant to have acknowledged that the Puritan ideal, like our own, was too much shadowed by the traditions of many Catholic centuries.

To Miss Martin

5th October 1878.

Thank you very much for your kind letter: the knowledge of how deep and earnest is the desire of many in the church for the success of all our church work is a great source of strength to me, and should be a great source of strength to all of us. I am sorry that you have been so much troubled by the organ at the Lord's Supper; I will speak about it: I do not suppose that any one would object to have silence; and I can quite understand that the music, however soft and quiet, may be to some a hindrance to thought.

The anthem, however, is, I believe, to many—I know it is to some—one of the most helpful parts of the service. I don't think that any sermon on the words "The Lord is mindful of

1 "The Apostolic Christian." *Sermons on Subjects of the Day*, pp. 275 foll.

His own" could do so much for me as the anthem when it is well sung; and my case is that of many others. I can hardly imagine that even those who receive no benefit from it, can be really pained by it; if they are, those of us to whom it is of so much use might perhaps be called to give it up; but the sacrifice would be a heavy one. I think part of the mistake lies in supposing that the anthem ought always to be worship; but very often it is a statement of truth, and to me, a more pathetic and impressive statement of truth than any sermon. When the anthem is not in the book I read the words, and indeed I generally read them when it is; and I should have thought that as the words are generally very few, it would not be difficult to remember them.

In what you say about the anthem leading any one to leave us I think you must be mistaken. So far as I know, those who have left us during the last few months are very few, and I have too good an opinion of them to suppose that they could have dissolved their relationship with us because they find no help in a part of the service which is very helpful to others, and which lasts only five or six minutes.

To Miss Phipson

24th December 1880.

I am grateful for your letter. Perhaps you are hardly in possession of the real circumstances which are every now and then brought home to me in forms which occasion great anxiety. While, on the one hand, I am from time to time greatly encouraged by the discovery in unexpected quarters of a large growth of faith and earnestness and of joy in God, I am also greatly troubled by the extent to which, here and there, all faith in Christ is being shaken—even among church members—by intellectual difficulties of a kind that ought not to disturb faith.

I find that the only effective way of dealing with these difficulties is to put aside—as being for the moment of no importance — everything not involved in the main issue. A man may have a very firm and deep and invigorating faith in Christ who is in grave doubt—not only on such matters as I referred to last Sunday morning, but on topics lying still nearer the centre of things; and it is a very common and fatal snare for people to imagine that they can cover their faltering confidence in Him by appealing to these secondary difficulties.

The questions, so far as I remember them, which I referred to last Sunday are and must, I think, for a long time, be open

questions among the most loyal and devout Christians who have grown up among the conflicts of the last twenty years.

What you say in your letter lies in another province. That God in divers manners spoke in times past by the prophets, that Judaism was from Him—these are not open questions to any who have got beyond the elements of Christian Faith; but whether the Book of Jonah is literal history—whether, that is, it was meant to be literal history—whether the early chapters of the Book of Genesis were meant to be literal history, whether the Books of Chronicles were written under a sacerdotal bias—are questions which may be determined in a sense contrary to that of tradition without touching the Divine and supernatural character of the ancient revelation; it is to this latter that Christ and Christianity are pledged.

Thank you very much for your kind Christmas present. I hope that the changing years are bringing to you an ever deepening joy in Him whom it was your happiness to know in years which were comparatively untroubled by the storms which are beating on the faith of so many of our younger friends.

12th April 1882.

Thank you very much for your letter. It touches more questions than I can discuss on paper, but I am thankful for every assurance of interest and concern in the deeper life of the church. About this I have been for some time past more than anxious. For the three winters preceding that which is just passing away, I declined all engagements out of Birmingham of a controversial and agitating kind, and, at home, dwelt persistently on the central and elementary aspects of the gospel. The result was profoundly disappointing; the apparent success of the work at Carr's Lane was less than during the time that Mr. Rogers and I were taking our heavy work on behalf of the Liberation Society.

There is one sentence in your letter which struck me as indicating a grave misconception. You speak of "remarks of a depreciating character" on "the inspired record" made for the "conciliation of unbelievers." If any such purpose as this influenced my public or private teaching I should be guilty of what seems to me the basest treachery to truth. But I am constantly coming across indications of the fatal effect of refusing to recognise the true character of the Holy Scriptures, and from time to time am grateful for the discovery that God has used my own teaching in these matters to prevent a wreck of faith. My only doubt in this matter is whether I should not give more frequent prominence to what I fear pains others besides yourself.

I am afraid that if I were charged with desiring to conciliate believers, most impartial judges would say that there was ground for the charge. But my desire, however far I fall short of it, is to bear witness to the truth.

To Mr. E. Mander

2nd December 1886.

You will be glad to hear that my journey to London on Tuesday, which deprived me of the pleasure of seeing you, succeeded beyond hope. An arrangement was reached which promises to terminate troubles which have extended over many years, and which were on the point of taking two great Christian communities into the law courts as rivals and enemies.[1]

I am sorry to hear so discouraging an account of your health. One of the hardest things in connection with pain and weakness seems to be that whatever merciful help we receive from God, nothing seems to come of it. In work, if God gives us grace, there is something to show. In suffering, God may give us equal grace, and it all seems exhausted in merely keeping us from impatience, irritability, and discontent. Perhaps it is well for us all to have some months in life during which Divine help reaches us in forms which cannot minister to self-complacency. We are apt to take some credit for work, though we acknowledge that everything that is good in it comes from God; but when the whole result—as far as we can see—of what God does for us is to keep us from resentment, melancholy, and other forms of evil temper, we can find nothing to claim as our own: our own is simply the evil from which we are kept. And yet during all this time there may be a steady growth in elements of life and power which will make all things new to us when the time for activity returns.

I earnestly trust that you may have, not only this deliverance from evil, but, if God sees fit, much of tranquil joy in His presence and love.

To the Rev. H. Arnold Thomas

25th October 1889.

My old woman's blessing sent me on to the hills;[2] your letter has greatly humbled me. It seems so strange and im-

[1] The "Tooting Case": a conflict between Congregationalists and Presbyterians for possession of a chapel.

[2] Mr. Thomas wrote after a sermon preached at Kensington—"Helping the Minister"—in which Dale told an experience of his own:—

"There are times when the most buoyant sink into despondency, when a

possible that anything I have said can have been of any service to you in the highest ways, that I can hardly believe it enough to be thankful for it. But I feel very deeply the kindness of your letter, and am more grateful for that than I can say.

How natural it is to be restless and dissatisfied with all that we can do—not natural merely, but necessary, inevitable, if we think of it at all. I have almost given it up; the results, when I think at all of my own work, are so miserable. But when a man whom I never saw gets on to the step of a railway carriage and thanks me with tears in his eyes—as happened some time ago—or a poor woman blesses me in the streets, I take heart and am happy. The great thing, however, is self-oblivion and the constant thought of Christ and the Spirit of Christ, and the vision of God. I never knew any man, however, except my dear old friend T. H. Gill, the author of the hymns, with whom that vision was constant. He told me some years ago that for many years, except for the briefest intervals, he had lived in the very light of God; that when the cloud came he prayed, and the light returned. It seemed to me very wonderful. I am not quite sure that the unbroken glory is what we all ought to expect.

Do you remember expressing your apprehensions to me about parts of a sermon I preached at Highbury once on "Not having my own righteousness"? I thought I knew something about that truth then; I think now that perhaps your apprehensions were excited because, through not knowing enough, I put it very imperfectly. Of late it has come to me with such clearness and force that I feel that I never knew it before; but I cannot put it; what I say seems to miss the best part of what I have seen. Dr. Wace called on me a few days ago; his loyalty to Luther made him kindle when I spoke of it. I wonder whether we shall soon get a statement of Justification by Faith that will be intellectually satisfactory. The Atonement and Justification—not Forgiveness merely—are rooted, as I now see, in the same truth, and it is not very easy to hold the one completely without the other. The new apprehension of what Justification means

gray, chilly mist creeps over the soul of those who have the largest happiness in the service of God, and then they feel as if all their strength was gone. Not very long ago—if I may venture once more to speak of myself—one of these evil moods was upon me; but as I was passing along one of the streets of Birmingham, a poor but decently dressed woman, laden with parcels, stopped me and said, 'God bless you, Dr. Dale!' Her face was unknown to me. I said, 'Thank you, but what is your name?' 'Never mind my name,' she answered; 'but if you could only know how you have made me feel hundreds of times, and what a happy home you have given me!—God bless you!' The mist broke, the sunlight came, I breathed the free air of the mountains of God."—*Fellowship with Christ*, pp. 301, 302.

has greatly contributed to confirm all that I believed before about the Atonement.

But I did not intend to write you so much; but only to thank you from my heart for the strength and joy that will come to me some day from the remembrance of your letter, and for the kindness which moved you to write it, which already gives me great pleasure.

To the Rev. Dr. Crosskey

24th August 1886.

From my very heart I sympathise with you in your great trouble;[1] but there is little to be said except to commend you to God. It is the sense of His presence, apart from any consolation that can be put into words, that gives strength to bear the desolation. Leo had a great charm even for friends like myself who saw him rarely. What he must have been to you and Mrs. Crosskey, I cannot imagine.

To you and me who have to talk to other people in their sorrow, these cruel experiences are, I suppose, among the necessary elements of our discipline; they compel us to touch ground and to verify our own words. I suppose that God Himself could not be our Consoler unless in a very real and deep sense the sorrows of the creation caused Him grief.

God be with you and yours, who are also His.

To ——

25th July 1878.

Your last letter troubles me. I was hoping when you were here that you had learned what seemed to me to be the truth which for the hour has supreme claims on you: "They also serve who only stand and wait." You say you are eager to "live"; but you have been "living" at so intense a rate that but for some pause, and a tolerably prolonged one, life would soon be spent. Indeed quietness is indispensable if you are to have the fruit of past suffering and thought. Not until you have recovered completely from all the agitation and excitement, can you so master the contents of your own present thinking as to make it possible either for yourself or others to say how much is to endure, how much is to pass away.

Take the chief point you raise in your last letter, that the

[1] The death of a son.

philosophical side of revelation seems to you greater than its redemptive element; I suppose this really means that when for the first time the redemptive work of Christ takes its place in the eternal life of God, the temporal incidents of His redemptive work are dwarfed by the infinite abysses from which they emerge. The impression is a very natural one, but I should like to know how it looks to you when the tumult with which you have welcomed this aspect of truth is over. Perhaps then you may see that the temporal incidents of Christ's redemptive work suggest a great crisis in the history of the Divine relation to the universe, and constitute the visible manifestation of the supreme moment in the eternal life of God. But time, peace, and the subsidence of the recent exaltation are necessary for the review.

"Cumbering the ground"? no—you want God's will done in your life—His, not yours; don't quarrel with Him, or become restless, if you find that His will is not what you would like it to be; it must be better.

Have you ever thought of Christ's thirty years before His ministry began? I wonder whether He was eager to begin to live; I think not. He had learnt the last secret which you, I hope, will learn soon—that the law of life is to leave all to the Divine will—to do nothing if that seems the result of leaving all to God's will.

I do not know whether I have made my meaning clear. God keep you.

To ——

26th May 1883.

I suppose that the intolerable sense of void and chaos which comes to us at times is one of the necessary conditions of a new creation, and in the history of the soul new creations come often. Geologists may be right in being suspicious of catastrophes, but in the diviner regions evolution is not a peaceful movement—it goes on through darkness, agitation, confusion. But you know the beginning—the thought of God; and the end—the perfect recovery of God. Have courage and wait.

To Miss Gertrude Smith

3rd March 1879.

I think that we must "give account" of all the deeds done in the body. God removes our sins from us "as far as the east

is from the west," not permitting them to come between ourselves and Him, not permitting them to interfere with the manifestation of His love and the free communication of His Spirit; and yet they will affect our eternal position. Forgiveness removes all personal antagonism on God's part towards us, but does not undo all the effects of our wrong-doing. The sins which we have repented of and forsaken will not bring us into "condemnation," but there will be so much less, on their account, for God to reward.

Self-examination is a very necessary thing now and then, but I think that when we are at the Lord's Supper we should think of Christ, not of ourselves.

I hope that you are well and happy, working hard in order to please God, and rejoicing in your knowledge of His love to you.

2nd December 1886.

You cannot tell what pleasure it gave me to find that you remembered my birthday in Rome. The letter came yesterday and the flowers this morning. You tell me that Bertha and you sent violets; but a fairy must have put in a rose on the road. Is not that a happy omen?

Yes; I had heard of your engagement, and that "Harry" is said to be very nice. You must excuse me for speaking of him so disrespectfully, but I do not think that I have heard his other name. However, as I tell my children's class, our Christian name is our real name; the other is mere surplus, or surname. That is always a pleasant thought to me. My real name—my own name—is that which reminds me of my relation to Christ.

I hope that you are dreaming dreams and seeing visions of future happiness. Don't be afraid of expecting too much from earthly affection; only expect more from the Divine love. God bless you both—I mean you and "Harry."

To Miss Colman

December 1881.

Hearty thanks for the very pretty Christmas card and a Happy New Year to you.

I hope that your Newnham life will yield you all the accessions of intellectual interest and strength that you are hoping to receive from it. The years in which we are consciously ad-

vancing into new provinces of intellectual activity are years of romance and are memorable for ever.

I suppose that like all the specially intense forms of life this, too, has its perils; you are happy if these perils are not touching you. To me the chief form of danger seems to lie in the influence which intellectual excitements sometimes exert in withdrawing us from those personal relationships in which the ethical life reaches its complete development. Some of us are more likely to give way to this inducement than others: the life of the home, of society, of the church, loses its hold on us when we are under the spell of the enchanted lands of the intellect; books become dearer to us than friends and kindred; and the commonplace interests of everyday life, since they do not bring with them any intellectual stimulus, cease to be attractive. If without presumption, as one who has known something of this danger, I may venture to speak of it to you, I should like to suggest that it is very real, very subtle, and very grave. And yet, looking at your life, I think you must be safer from it than many are.

The direct religious peril seems to me, in most cases, far less serious than the ethical danger; and if the ethical danger is overcome, religious faith and earnestness are, I think, likely to be uninjured.

You are having, I trust, a very merry Christmas; this, too, is a most wholesome defence against the intellectual absorption of which I have ventured to speak.

To Miss Helen Colman

4th December 1882.

I wonder how it is that you are all so good to me. I was charmed at receiving your card and good wishes last Friday. It must seem to you a very long way from your age to mine; but looking back you will find it very short. And what strikes one more and more is the permanence of one's early life—the identity between youth and mature manhood. I do not mean that God has not lifted me out of many unsatisfactory things which surrounded and entangled me when I was your age, but that every habit, good and evil, of those early years seems to have permanently affected my whole life. The battle is largely lost or won before it seems to begin. The Temptation in the Wilderness determines, or largely determines, our fate. You, my dear Helen, are I trust making a good fight.

To Miss Colman

29th July 1884.

Looking back upon the time—it seems very long ago—when I was your age I think I remember regarding the customary birthday wish as a very poor one. Happiness seemed to me in those days an ignoble thing. I have learnt since what a wonderful blending of many rare and precious things—of high personal elements in oneself and others and of felicitous circumstances—is necessary to make happiness possible. Not in childhood—for children achieve happiness easily. But as life goes on, happiness comes to be more and more the crown of loyalty to the ideal of life: and even this is not enough; those whose lives are a part of our life must share the loyalty, or else happiness is impossible. So that I have come to regard happiness as being something much greater than it seemed to be when life was all before me; and in wishing you happiness I include nearly everything that can contribute to what in the very highest sense of the word is a successful life.

I am reading Maurice's Life again, or rather am having it read to me. He seems to have had more than a suspicion that the discomfort with which he received the affection and honour of his friends lay very near the root of all false relations to God. He did not quite learn the secret, but he nearly learnt it. What he wanted was to be conscious that he *deserved* all the love and trust that came to him. I am more and more clear about this, that we must be content to know that the best things come to us both from man and God without our deserving them. We are under grace, not under law. Not until we have beaten down our pride and self-assertion so as to be able to take everything from earth and heaven just as a child takes everything, without raising the question, Do I deserve this or not? or rather with the habitual conviction that we deserve nothing and are content that it should be so, do we get into right relations either with our Father in heaven or with the brothers and sisters about us. That principle is capable of a most fatal conception, but in its *truth* it is one of the secrets of righteousness and joy. The craving to *deserve* can never be satisfied; we have rather to try to be grateful for what we do not deserve.

I am not sure what has led me into this dissertation so unfit for a birthday letter; it came, however, from what I said about happiness.

To ——

5th December 1885.

It was really very good of you to write to me. To be assured that God has used words of mine to suggest fresh discoveries of His grace and power to those who have listened to me, is a delight which never loses its freshness—is as fresh as the sunshine is, and as welcome.

I trust that you are getting back your physical strength and are conscious of it. As for strength of the higher kind, I am gradually coming to see more clearly what, of course, we have all seen more or less dimly from the first—that the consciousness of strength is nothing more than the consciousness of God. Strength is never in any true sense ours: we are but streams from the eternal Fountain. It is the consciousness of the fulness of the Fountain that gives us courage. But we are all, I suppose, inclined to wish to be lakes—or, at least, little pools—with waters of our own to be conceited about.

To Miss Colman

1st December 1886.

It has been in my heart to write to you nearly every day since I heard that you had been unwell. Not that it seemed necessary to say anything to you that would not occur to your own mind, but chiefly to assure you of what you very well know—that when the even course of a friend's life is broken either by sorrow or weakness, or by joy, there is a special appeal to affectionate thought and sympathy.

These periods of weakness which seem to come to you every now and then must not be thought of as though they were waste places in life, nor need you be curious and anxious to discover what profit they yield either to yourself or others. It is part of that faith which the infinite goodness and wisdom of God should command, to believe that He is still disciplining us to perfection and drawing from our lives the power of service He desires, even when all activity is interrupted. I wonder whether you have discovered that in times of physical depression the great commonplaces of our higher knowledge seem to gain infinitely in charm and dignity. In health and vigour we are apt, especially in youth, to be adventurous; we press to the boundaries of ascertained truth and try to cross them; but if I may judge from experience and observation, we come home when our

strength abates and learn that the freshest things are the oldest, and the most wonderful the most familiar.

To ——

1st December 1890.

M. says you don't eat enough and don't sleep enough. If I were re-editing the Ten Commandments I should add another two and make them twelve. These ancient Jews did not need any command either to sleep or to eat; they did both whenever they had a chance. But we have invented new sins: we who ought to have learned something of the mystery of the transfiguration of matter and the wonderful kinship of dust and the spirit of man, have come to be careless about the body, and treat it as a foe, not as an ally and a friend. Philosophical and religious asceticism is responsible for a great deal of misery and sin. Please eat more and sleep more, and be happy, and so contribute to the happiness of your friends.

Thank you, too, for your letter, and thank you very much. I cannot answer your main question; but I think I see the direction in which the answer lies. Mr. Latham in his *Pastor Pastorum* brings out very forcibly a truth which I suppose most thoughtful Christian people have always recognised more or less distinctly—that Christ in His treatment of His apostles always respected their personal freedom, never mastered them by the sheer force of the manifestation of all that He was. They were not granted the more overpowering disclosures till the less impressive had had time to work and to pass into life. And so the manifestations of Himself after the Resurrection were given only to those who had already believed on Him.

I can imagine that some manifestations of Christ would destroy rather than perfect our freedom: we have to grow to them. But it is a large subject. How often in past years have I had the thought which you express in your letter! It would save us so much, we think, if what comes to most of us late came early; but I suppose we are not able to bear it.

To ——

8th December 1894.

Thank you very much for the portrait.[1] It is very beautiful. I could not have imagined that any photograph could have

[1] Of the Bishop of Durham.

given so perfectly what one desires to see in a portrait of Westcott. It will be a happiness and consolation to look at it.

Thank you, too, very much for your letter. I am grateful for everything that encourages me to hope that I may still be a channel through which God's grace reaches men: the channel seems to me at times almost closed in places, and in other places broken; but if the Divine waters can still trickle through, and are not made too brackish by the impurities over which they pass, I am very thankful.

I have been very glad lately to think that you seemed more vigorous and buoyant, and to hope that this was a sign that your spiritual heaven was clearer of clouds. But it is a great thing to be able to bear up notwithstanding the clouds. I sometimes think that in the case of those who are not tried by sharp outward temptations to break God's commandments, the trial may come in inward temptations to distrust His grace. It would be a bad business for us if we were not tried in some way.

BOOK IV

CHAPTER XXI

THE EDUCATION COMMISSION AND THE AUSTRALIAN VISIT

A new stage in life—The Royal Commission on Elementary Education—His colleagues—Examination of witnesses—The conscience clause—The Education Act of 1870 not a concession to Nonconformists—Religious Education and its nature—Nonconformist grievances—The Australian visit—The outward voyage—Arrival at Hobart—"Impressions of Australia"—A purely religious mission—Work in South Australia—Illness in Victoria and New South Wales—Results of the work—Letter from the Bishop of Adelaide—The voyage home.

ON looking back, it is plain that the year 1886 was the beginning of a new period in Dale's life, when the activities and interests that had drawn so largely on his time and strength were rapidly to decline. Such changes indeed are rarely apparent at their coming. The stages of our progress melt imperceptibly one into another. The ridge is reached and passed before we know it; and not until it lies behind us do we discern the downward slope and the streams racing with us to the valley and the sea. Quite apart from all other troubles, Dale was already enfeebled and depressed by a succession of calamities—the death of his brother, the loss of his child, his own illness. And now each year as it passed taught him more of the sad experiences of age—in the loosening of ties, the surrender of hopes, the ebb of vital energy which debars from work that was once a delight. But the passage from strength to infirmity was gradual. The shadows lengthened slowly; darkness did not come at one stride. There was still time for service. Aged 56.

For more than two years he was kept in touch with

public affairs and public men by his duties as a member of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education Acts in England and Wales; even after he had withdrawn from general politics, this tie remained unbroken. When the nomination was first offered to him in 1885, he accepted it with reluctance. The burden, he knew, would be heavy. An inquiry covering so wide a range and including such a mass of detail could not fail to be protracted. And as a representative of Nonconformist interests, he foresaw that he would have to fight ineffectually against a hostile majority. But he felt that he could not honourably refuse to serve, and he learnt with relief that he would have for a colleague Mr. Henry Richard who, though not an expert in educational affairs, had taken an active part in the controversies of 1870, and thoroughly understood the religious difficulties that would inevitably be raised. Mr. Mundella's resignation before the Commission had settled to its work, made room for Mr. Lyulph Stanley, whose help Dale had always been anxious to secure, on account of his mastery of the Education Acts in every detail of their operation, and also for the courage and the tenacity with which he had upheld the national as against the denominational system; his accession doubled the strength of the minority.[1] Several letters passed between Dale and Mr. Richard before the Commission assembled, and while the order of its procedure was under discussion. Another letter, written to his wife, gives us a glimpse of what went on inside the Committee room at Westminster.

[1] The Commissioners were—Viscount Cross (Chairman), Cardinal Manning, the Earl of Harrowby, Earl Beauchamp, the Bishop of London (Dr. Temple), Lord Norton, Sir Francis Sandford (Under-Secretary for Scotland), Mr. Mundella, Sir John Lubbock (M.P. for the University of London), Sir Bernhard Samuelson (M.P. for Banbury), Dr. Rigg, Dr. Dale, Canon Gregory, Canon B. F. Smith, the Rev. T. D. C. Morse, Mr. C. H. Alderson (one of the Charity Commissioners), Mr. J. G. Talbot (M.P. for the University of Oxford), Mr. S. C. Buxton, Mr. T. E. Heller, Mr. B. C. Molloy (M.P for Birr division, King's County, Ireland), Mr. Samuel Rathbone, Mr. Henry Richard (M.P. for Merthyr Tydvil), Mr. George Shipton.

Mr. Heller was appointed as representing the Teachers in Elementary Schools; Mr. Shipton as representing the Trades Unions and the working men.

TO MR. HENRY RICHARD

28th December 1885.

I am very glad that you have consented to serve on the Royal Commission. My own judgment was that I was bound to serve even if I was alone, and in this both Chamberlain and Crosskey concurred. The best man we could get would, I imagine, be Lyulph Stanley—better, for this purpose, than Illingworth.

I have been off the School Board for five years; I found the work too oppressive in addition to my governorship of the Grammar School, which has been a very serious business. I am, therefore, not so familiar with questions affecting the Code as I was, and I suppose that Stanley is fresh in that department of the subject.

My present judgment is that we should work for the extreme position—universal School Boards, free education, and pure secularism, with whatever arrangements are necessary for making a transition to that position.

26th January 1886.

Do you not think that it would be well for us to have a talk before the meeting of the Commission on Thursday? I know nothing about the way that Commissions go to work, and you could tell me. We might also consider what our line is to be. It strikes me that we shall be very much alone.

13th February 1886.

I agree with you that something should be done to strengthen our side, and we will have a talk about men. On examining Temple's[1] proposals, I found that some of the most important questions have been overlooked, and I have made notes for suggestions on Tuesday. The two main points I propose to raise are the insertion of two additional main sections—the *first*, raising the contentious matter suggested by every sub-division under (2); the *second*, raising the question of the comparative educational efficiency of board schools and denominational schools; in this, we shall get the aid of a fair number of our present colleagues, and it is a vital question for *us*.

My preference is for Temple's *order*: Morse's points—most of them—come under one or other of Temple's; and the rest, with one possible exception, are covered by mine.

[1] Now Archbishop of Canterbury.

To his Wife

National Liberal Club,
9th March 1886.

I had a very pleasant journey up: it was not very cold, and the train kept excellent time. After lunch I got to the Commission, and we had a long discussion on proposals for the guidance of our inquiry. Mine were accepted without any objection. The Cardinal[1] is becoming more insinuating and gracious than ever. I was talking to Canon Gregory, and he came up to us and said: "Now we must find out some scheme under which all our schools can work freely; if we three could agree on any scheme we should settle the whole question." He then looked at me and said: "You must help us to agreement." I laughed and said: "Your Eminence seems to think that you and Canon Gregory *need* the help; I will do what I can." The old man seemed amused. We had a long and a rather tedious sitting.

The Commission met on Tuesday and Wednesday in every week. As a rule Dale went up to London on the Tuesday morning and returned on the Wednesday night; sometimes, however, the work broke into another day. During the first eighteen months he very rarely missed a meeting. Outside the Commission many hours had to be spent in studying the details of the questions coming up for discussion, and in preparation for examining witnesses on the evidence they were expected to give. In fact, while the Commission was sitting, it entirely absorbed his leisure. But though the strain was severe, he enjoyed the work. To be associated in such a task with men like the Bishop of London, Cardinal Manning, Canon Gregory, and Dr. Rigg, was an honour and a pleasure. From Viscount Cross—the Chairman—and from Lord Norton, he met with much courtesy and consideration. He was accustomed to work with friends, and he made friends in working. His personal relations with his colleagues were very cordial, especially with those who took the most active part in the inquiry. For Mr. Richard, of whom in spite of political sympathy and co-operation he had known

[1] Cardinal Manning.

but little, he came to feel a strong affection, not without regret that acquaintance had been so late in ripening into friendship.

His earlier interest in elementary education and its problems soon revived. The Minutes of evidence as reported in the three thick volumes issued by the Commission attest his vigour and assiduity. His experience at the Birmingham School Board had made him familiar with most of the points on which evidence was taken, and he had done what he could to extend his knowledge to the more recent developments of the educational system. It would be useless to attempt even to indicate the variety of the subjects which came under consideration: the syllabus of "points for inquiry" fills six pages of the Blue Book, and almost every one of these "points" involves a number of subordinate details. Questions of religion and morality; methods of mental, technical, and physical instruction; methods of organisation, inspection, and examination; the position and qualifications of teachers already in employment and of those under training for their profession; the various requirements of pupils of all ages and capacities—boys, girls, infants; questions relating to children at school, to those who should have been there but were not, and to those who had left school; the relation of central to local authority; economic questions of grants in aid and of fees; the interests of denominational schools in competition with board schools, of schools in the country and schools in the town;—all these matters, and many others of equal importance and complexity, had to be discussed and dealt with from every point of view.

From the outset Dale took an active part in questioning the witnesses who presented themselves before the Commissioners, and in his cross-examination he showed skill and resource. Most of the points at issue were of a technical kind, but one or two examples may be selected that will be generally intelligible, though as they relate only to one type of questions they inadequately represent the diversity of his interests.

One of the matters in dispute was the efficiency of the conscience clause as a means of protection for the children of Nonconformists, especially in the rural districts. In reply to the Earl of Harrowby, the Rev. D. J. Stewart, one of H.M. Chief Inspectors of Schools asserted his belief that the conscience clause was quite effective. Dale then proceeded to elicit his conception of "efficiency."

You said I think, yesterday, that in your judgment the conscience clause is quite effective?—I should say so.

Can you tell us what it "effects"?—Perfect protection for the child and the child's parents.

But, as I understand, you have rarely seen a child protected by it?—I said that I had rarely seen a child withdrawn.

Will you explain how it is effective if it protects no child?—I have never seen any cases of difficulty about the religious instruction given to children.

But a provision to be effective must "effect" something?—Yes.

And as I understand you do not know a case in which it has effected the protection of a child from religious teaching to which its parents might object?—I have never heard of the parents objecting to the religious teaching in the schools that I have had to visit.

Would you not rather say that it is inoperative, than that it is effective, if it is never put into operation?—I should not say that.

How can you tell the effectiveness of a provision that is never used?—I do not know to what extent it may be used. All I say is, that I have not seen more than one or two cases of children being withdrawn.

How do you know that there is no desire for it?—So far as the school showed it there was none.

But in order to discover that you must examine the parents, must you not?—But if the parents had objected, I think I must have seen it in the schools.

If the parents wished to use the conscience clause you mean that you would have seen the children withdrawn?—Yes.

But supposing that the parents regarded the conscience clause as an ineffective instrument, then you would not have seen the children withdrawn?—I cannot say.

As a matter of fact, so far as you are aware, the conscience clause does not protect children; you have never seen children

protected by it?—I have never seen children withdrawn in any number.[1]

It has often been alleged by the supporters of denominational education that the School Board system as established by the Act of 1870 practically amounts to the endowment of Nonconformist principles in religion. Mr. T. W. Allies—a distinguished convert to Roman Catholicism, and a prominent advocate of Roman Catholic interests—assented to that opinion when suggested by Canon Gregory; he also described voluntary schools as the shelter of religious liberty. Dale then took him in hand.

In reply to Canon Gregory I think you stated that, in your judgment, the Act of 1870 was practically an endowment of the general Nonconformist type of religion?—In so far as it erected what had been the practice of the Nonconformist schools into the principle upon which the board schools were to be governed.

Do you remember that there was a very serious division in the Liberal party in 1870 on the question of the Education Act?—Yes.

Do you remember who it was that opposed the religious settlement of 1870?—I think that great opposition was made to Mr. Forster upon the subject.

But by whom?—I forget by whom.

Was it not made by the Nonconformists of England generally?—I think so.

They did not, therefore, regard the religious settlement as a settlement in their favour?—Perhaps they wanted to get it still more in their favour.

They did not regard it as a settlement in their favour?—I think they did; but they might have liked something more, too. They would not produce it of their own accord; but supposing that it was produced, as now, by their opponents, they would take pride in the fact that the English legislature had taken their principles of school government and applied them to a new class of school.

Are you aware that there was a considerable secession of Nonconformists from the Liberal party on the ground of the

[1] *First Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education Acts, England and Wales*, 1886 (3972-3984), p. 149.

settlement of 1870? That does not look as if they were satisfied with it?—They never were satisfied, and they never will be satisfied, I think.

You would hardly, however, claim, I presume, to be an authority on Nonconformist views of religion and education?—I should claim to understand generally their principle, because I could not write on any subject of the kind without knowing it.

On the same ground as a Nonconformist might claim to be an authority upon Catholic opinion?—Yes, if he thought upon such subjects.

You said, did you not, that in your judgment the State should give the same assistance to all schools doing the same work?—Yes.

Does not that principle lead to the entire abolition of any voluntary contributions for denominational schools?—I do not see it.

How can board schools have voluntary contributions?—That is only putting in a very strong form the objection to board schools, as it seems to me.

You object to board schools altogether?—Yes, certainly.[1]

You spoke of voluntary schools as the shelter of religious liberty, I think?—Yes.

Are you aware that there are large districts in England, in which it is impossible for there to be more than one school without great disadvantage to education?—Yes, I am well aware of that from past experience.

And under the present denominational system the children of Nonconformists are obliged to attend the schools of the English Church from which their parents dissent?—Yes; that is your quarrel with the Established Church, with which I have nothing to do.

I wanted to know exactly how in such cases the voluntary schools were the shelter of religious liberty?—I suppose you would have the conscience clause, and I cannot help thinking that with regard to you, as well as with regard to the Established Church, the clause is perfectly efficient to protect you. I perfectly recognise the condition of the country parishes, because I have had experience of that very state of things which you mention, and I think the clause there will protect you very fairly. It would not protect us, because our system is one of definite religious teaching, which cannot be assimilated with the

[1] *First Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education Acts, England and Wales*, 1886 (9565-9578), p. 353.

state of things. It is a positive hardship to the Catholic child.

You are not contrasting your religion with mine on the point of definite religious teaching, are you?—Not at all. But the difference which exists between the position of the Established Church inhabitants in a village and the Dissenting inhabitants, whoever they may be, is very slight in comparison with the difference between either class and our children, if they are put into a board school or into a school governed by the conscience clause.

Of course, of that we are the best judges in the last resort? —I do not know whether you are.[1]

Another witness—a Wesleyan schoolmaster—making light of the religious difficulty, stated that in one case Jewish parents had deliberately allowed him to teach the Wesleyan Catechism to their child. Dale took this opportunity of bringing out the exact nature of what often goes by the name of "religious" or "Christian" teaching.

You said, did you not, in reply to Canon Smith, that the parents of the children valued the religious teaching very much? —I think they do.

But did you not also say, in reply to him, that you thought they did not very much care what kind of religious teaching it was?—No, I do not think I said that.

Did not Canon Smith ask you whether parents were particular about the denomination with which the school was connected?—You refer not so much to the tone of the religious teaching as to the denominationalism?

Yes.—I cannot form any opinion upon that point. I think that the parents value the religious teaching, because they do not withdraw their children from it.

Is that the ground upon which you make that statement? —Partially.

Is that the principal ground?—Parents have told me little bits of Bible lessons that the children have carried home, and they have seemed to value the instruction very much.

Do you think that the parents of the little Jew who was not withdrawn greatly valued your Wesleyan teaching because they did not withdraw the child?—No, I do not think that the parent

[1] *First Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education Acts, England and Wales*, 1886 (9590-9595), p. 354.

valued the Wesleyan teaching, but I think he knew that, so far as I could, I would not injure the conscience of the child. He has sent me pieces of Passover bread and notices of Jewish festivals, and so on, thinking that I took an interest in his faith. I do not mean to say that he wants his child to be a Methodist at all; no doubt he wants his child to be a Jew, for he sends him to a Hebrew school on a Tuesday afternoon; but I think he has confidence that the child's conscience will not be injured, and that there will be nothing unfair done.

You think he believes that your teaching is not likely to make the child a Christian?—I cannot say that.

Do you think that he would have consented to send the child to your religious instruction if he had thought that it was likely to make the child a Christian?—I think he would have objected if my teaching had been constantly dogmatic and denominational.

You have hardly answered my question. If he had thought that your teaching was likely to make the child a Christian, do you think that he would have permitted the child to remain? —No, I should think not.

Then the parent had no reason to suppose that your teaching was likely to make the child a Christian?—So far as the Christian Faith is not a matter of morality or of general religion, but of the person of Jesus Christ, I think he would have withdrawn the child if he had thought that the child was likely to accept what we consider to be religious teaching with regard to the person of Christ.

Do you attach much value to religious teaching which does not incline children to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?—I think that so far as elementary teaching is concerned the main part of the religious teaching for us as morality has its foundation in religion and the Bible.

The general religious truths that are common to all religious sects, whether Jews or Christians?—I would rather aim at making a child a Christian than at making a child a Methodist, if I may put it so.

But do you mean that morality should be founded on what is common to all religious sects, Jews and Christians alike, or upon that which is specifically Christian?—There is only one morality, and it is founded upon that which is common to all sects.[1]

Dale himself attached very little value to religious teaching that was not definite, and in which the central

[1] *Second Report of the Royal Commission*, 1887 (17837-17850), p. 137.

truths of the Christian faith were diluted or ignored. He did not believe in the efficacy of "undenominational" religion as a mode of belief or as the basis of conduct. He explained his position in a letter to Lord Norton.

To Lord Norton

1st July 1887.

I can quite understand that what I said on Tuesday afternoon in reply to your earnest appeal, by which I was greatly touched, seemed unsatisfactory. Let me deal with the question in a concrete form.

In the first place — no concordat between Evangelical Christians and Unitarians on the subject of religious teaching can possibly be satisfactory. Unless our Lord is spoken of with the reverence, awe, and wonder which His Divinity should inspire, I think that to talk to children about His earthly history must discourage faith rather than contribute to it.

In the second place — no concordat is possible with the Roman Catholics: they are obliged, with their views of the Church, to meet the proposal with an unconditional refusal. The attempt, as far as it was made, in Ireland was a failure from the beginning.

In the third place — no concordat is possible between Nonconformists and that party in the English Church which at present is most vigorous and powerful, and is showing the most earnest religious life — I mean the High Church party.

With the sanction of the Baptismal Office and of the Catechism, they insist that in baptism a child receives supernatural grace and is made a member of Christ. This, if true, is a truth of immense practical importance in the teaching of children. Those who believe it are in the habit of reminding children that if they lie, or steal, or commit other grave sins they will forfeit the great baptismal gift. I have no right to ask men who hold this opinion to be silent about it in the school if any religious teaching is given at all: if I asked them to be silent they would very properly refuse. For myself this doctrine — with the implication it carries that those children who are unbaptized have not received the gift and must therefore, as the English Church provides, be buried without the words of hope with which the Church inters baptized persons — is a pernicious superstition. I believe that Christ died for all men, baptized and unbaptized; that every child that is born into the world — child of heathen or of Christian, of savage or of saint —

is infinitely dear to God's heart, and is destined by God, through Christ, to eternal blessedness. This great inheritance may be forfeited by revolt against God and by the refusal to receive His salvation; but children who die young do not forfeit it, and whether baptized or not they live with God. To me baptism does not *give* a child a part in these great things, but declares that the child already has a part in them—just as the Coronation did not make the Queen our Sovereign, but declared that she was: she was Queen a year before she was crowned.

Excluding those whom I have named, there remain only the Evangelical Nonconformists and those members of the English Church who appear to me to explain away the clear teaching of her formularies.

This, however, is only an illustration of the difficulties of a concordat. We may all see the same sun and stars; but our astronomical theories—our teaching about them—may differ.

The difficulty of securing masters and mistresses who will teach so as really to reach the hearts and consciences of the children is also serious.

My conclusion is — Let the school be secular; let the churches find how to draw the children to Christ. I have great faith in Sunday Schools. Out of 800 or 900 communicants in my own church, at least 400 were led to live a Christian life by the Sunday School. Mr. Towers's evidence shows that the overwhelming majority of children in public elementary schools are also in Sunday schools; and if the clergy would give the strength to Sunday schools which they now give to Day schools, I believe that the difficulty would be solved.

He had already developed this line of argument in his examination of the Rev. J. Duncan, who stated, in reply to his questions, that moral teaching must be based on religious truths.

Do you suppose that the religious truths upon which moral teaching should be based are those truths by which church is distinguished from church, or the truths which are held in common by nearly all the churches which profess to be Christian?—I do not see how you can pick and choose amongst doctrines which are equally true. Of course it is difficult to discuss first principles in this way, because one does not see in a moment all the bearings of a statement; but it seems to me that you cannot teach effectively without teaching the whole of what you believe to be true; and I do not see how you can

decide amongst the religious truths you accept which are more important and which are less.

I do not wish to discuss the matter; I should probably agree very much with what you are saying; but I wanted to know what your own view was. Is such moral teaching as you would give to a child based upon the truths specially distinctive of a particular church, or is it based upon truths which are held in common by most Christian churches?—I do not know that I have studied very much the differences between different bodies, but I imagine that some truths are very generally held by all bodies, and that there are others which only the Church holds and which ought by no means to be kept back in teaching the children.

And the moral teaching in your schools would be partly rested upon those distinctive truths, you think?—Certainly.

Perhaps I might instance the doctrine of the grace given in baptism; that may be made the ground of moral teaching?—Our Catechism puts that in the very forefront, and I do not see how it can be evaded at all.[1]

He conducted what may be described as the examination in chief of the Rev. E. F. M. MacCarthy and Dr. Crosskey, who were called as representatives of the progressive policy adopted by the Birmingham School Board, and also of the five witnesses who appeared, if not to substantiate the grievances of Nonconformists, to explain the grounds of their dissatisfaction with the existing system—Mr. Thomas Snape, Mr. Robert Clough, Dr. Bruce of Huddersfield, the Rev. John Atkinson, President of the Methodist Free Church, and the Rev. Charles Williams, then Chairman of the Baptist Union. To obtain precise evidence of unfair treatment, however notorious, was not easy. Injustice does not always exhibit itself in a specific and tangible shape; and those who have suffered most from its influence are most averse from giving evidence, lest a formal and public complaint should aggravate oppression. To Dale this part of his work was both most difficult and most distasteful. He did his best to obtain positive proof of disabilities which he knew existed, but he was dissatisfied with the results

[1] *First Report of the Royal Commission*, 1886 (10964-10967), p. 410.

of his efforts, and heartily rejoiced when this portion of the inquiry was dismissed.

To Mr. Henry Richard

7th June 1886.

I wish you could think of people who could give evidence worth having on our side; I have been trying, but unsuccessfully. Browne of Wrentham was my sheet-anchor, and he is dead, dear fellow.

20th July 1886.

The question of evidence on our side is exercising me a great deal. I have had letters written to the Secretaries of County Associations all over England, inquiring for persons who could give evidence on the grounds of Nonconformist dissatisfaction with the present system. There is abundance of vague discontent, but as soon as people are pressed for definite facts there is nothing to be had—at least nothing available for evidence. This is inevitable, I suppose, from the nature of the case. I might, I dare say, get a number of people up to say that the present system works very unjustly, but even apart from the difficulty of sustaining definite grievances there is an absence of a firm grasp of the question. The controversy will have to be fought over again, and more thoroughly than before. . . .

. . . If nothing else can be done I will, if you wish it, tender myself as a witness. This would save the time of the Commission, as I could give the substance of a great deal of correspondence that has been going on at intervals for some years.

30th April 1887.

Barring this,[1] I think we may be very well satisfied with the achievements of our five men this week. Atkinson, about whom I was very anxious, had an easy time. He stood Talbot's questioning admirably.

I am afraid that I have too little of the fighting element in me. This part of our business—though it is the special part, for which I, at least, am put on—is extremely distasteful to me.

[1] A case in which a witness, after giving evidence, asked leave to withdraw an important statement.

THE AUSTRALIAN VISIT

In the middle of July 1887 his work on the Commission was interrupted by a journey to Australia. The evidence by this time was nearly complete; and some time must necessarily elapse before the draft report was ready for discussion. So his absence then was less inconvenient than it would have been either at an earlier or at a later stage of the inquiry. He had often been urged to visit the Australasian colonies. Twenty years had passed since the churches there had come under the personal influence of any recognised leader of British Congregationalism, and Mr. Binney's visit in 1868-69 had now become but a memory to the old and a tradition to the young. At this time, several of the colonies were about to celebrate the Jubilee of Australian Congregationalism, and the desire was general that some one should be present who could speak with authority in the name of the churches of the mother country. Aged 57.

At first Dale refused to consider the proposal that he should go out as a delegate. He had but just recovered from a serious illness; he feared that the work and the climate might overtax his strength, and that his prolonged absence might injuriously affect the church at Carr's Lane. But Mr. Searle of Adelaide, who was most active in the matter, would take no refusal; and his "kindly persistence" so far prevailed that the question was referred for consideration to the church officers. To Dale's surprise, they decided that if he felt he could go with safety they must not hinder him, and that the interests of a single church ought not to stand in the way of any larger service that he might be capable of rendering to the cause of Congregationalism elsewhere. In due course a formal invitation from the Congregational Unions of the Australian colonies was received and accepted. It was ultimately arranged, to his great delight, that Mr. Albert Spicer should accompany him as a colleague to share the work; Mrs. Spicer, Mrs. Dale, and a daughter went with

them. They sailed in the *Arawa* from Tilbury on 12th July, going out by the Cape of Good Hope, and so avoiding the fiery heat of the Suez Canal and the Red Sea in the height of summer.

On 6th August they touched at Cape Town and spent a few hours on shore. As soon as they landed, they were met by representatives of the Congregational churches, who presented an address in which welcome mingled with regret that the visit was so brief. They drove about the town for an hour or two, visited some of the public buildings, called on the Prime Minister, Sir Gordon Sprigg, and were taken over the Houses of Assembly by Mr. Judhope, the Secretary to the Colony. Then, laden with flowers and fruit, they returned to the ship; but a few minutes before they started, Sir Gordon Sprigg and several other members of the Ministry came on board to bid them good-bye. Eighteen days more brought them to the end of their voyage, and on 22nd August they reached Hobart and anchored in the mouth of the Derwent. At 7.30 P.M. —in the inverted order of the year—it was already dark. But the *Arawa* had been reported from a station thirty miles away, and her engines had hardly stopped when a steam-launch dashed alongside full of eager, hearty people, who boarded the ship with a rush, eager to carry off their guests at once to the homes provided for them. That proving impossible, they returned the next morning, and took them ashore with ringing cheers, echoed from the ship as the launch steamed away.

Nothing would be easier than to fill a chapter with an account of Dale's Australian experiences—the places that he visited, the people that he met, the questions that he discussed, the welcome that greeted him wherever he went. But in his *Impressions of Australia*,[1] he has told his own tale. There he has set out with some fulness his observations of the state of politics, education, morals and religion, in Australia; his estimate of the genius and character of the people; and his speculations as to the possibilities of their future growth and development. It is a

[1] Reprinted, with additions, from the *Contemporary Review*, 1888.

breezy, buoyant book, written while memory was still fresh and vivid. And although in some parts it is rather a eulogy than an appraisement, it has won high commendation for knowledge and insight from men familiar with the life of the colonies. It disclaims any right to speak with the assurance of an expert. No stranger, Dale was well aware, however well equipped with information, can be sure that he has mastered all the factors of a complex society, or that he has correctly appreciated their relative importance. But he himself was a man of affairs. Before his visit he had studied the history, the position, and the problems of the Australian colonies. A row of note-books contains in summary the results of his reading. And it is the man that knows who can most easily learn. "To him that hath shall be given."

It may be well, therefore, to recall the objects of his journey rather than its incidents. He left home resolved that his work in Australia should be a religious work only, and that he would not entangle himself with imperial or colonial politics. His friend, Mr. Searle, was anxious that he should lecture on one or two political questions. "Gladstone and the Liberal leaders," he wrote, "are so misunderstood in these colonies that it would be a mercy to enlighten our darkness"; a request which, coming when it did, must have afforded some amusement. During his visit Dale was beset by similar appeals to speak on disestablishment, secular education, the Irish question, the position of the Liberal party. In Sydney, some ingenious journalists suggested that he might like to attend a public meeting on a Saturday afternoon, and answer any questions that might be put to him on questions of general politics. To many his persistent refusal to say anything about such matters was a real disappointment. He knew it, and in a farewell address at Adelaide he explained his reasons for silence. In the colonies, at any rate, free from the yoke that he was compelled to bear at home, he had determined to speak only about those questions for which he cared supremely, and on which he could speak with full assurance and conviction—the moral obligations, the spiritual

laws, and the transcendent hopes, "which, like the stars, have no parallax, and are the same for men of all lands."[1] It was for religious purposes that he had come, and for religious purposes alone.

He had been invited by the Congregational churches as a leader of Congregationalism. It was an essential part of his mission to assert the principles by which they were united; not to attack those who rejected what they affirmed, nor to spread dissatisfaction among members of other communions, but to convert Congregationalists to Congregationalism, to deepen their conviction, to fire their enthusiasm, to give them a larger and nobler conception of truths imperfectly understood or inadequately revered. Wherever he went he preached Congregationalism—not the bastard Congregationalism that regards itself as a democratic form of Church polity, and teaches the people that they have a right to govern the Church as they please, but the Congregationalism of the heroic age which makes the people responsible for finding the mind of Christ as to the way in which His Church should be governed.

A polity of this order derives its freedom and its force from the vigour and fulness of the religious life. It can be kept from degeneracy and decay only by growth in knowledge of Divine truth and by the renewal of devout affections. To confirm men in their loyalty to Congregational principles, Dale always recognised that it was necessary to strengthen their loyalty to Christ. The revelation of Divine Love and Divine Law made through Him to mankind, His atonement for sin, His power to redeem from evil, the indwelling grace of the Holy Spirit, the significance of the Lord's Supper, and the need of prayer for cultivating close and intimate relations with God, were truths on which Dale persistently dwelt in his teaching. Christ, he felt, might be preached without preaching Congregationalism; but he could not preach Congregationalism without first preaching Christ.

The perils and the impediments of the devout life both for individuals and for communities vary with different

[1] *Impressions of Australia*, p. 264.

conditions. Societies still in their youth, abounding in energy and enterprise, with undefined possibilities of progress opening before them, are sorely tempted to concentrate thought and effort on material prosperity. And where fortune may await a man at any turn of the road, he is easily led to take short cuts to wealth through wild and illegitimate speculation. From what he already knew, and from what he saw for himself, Dale felt it necessary to utter an emphatic warning against this tendency. It was this that he had in his mind when he insisted that Christian faith gives no pledge of material rewards, and that to a Christian man wealth must always be a matter of secondary concern.[1]

It had been arranged that a month should be given to each of the three colonies, most of the time being spent in the capitals and their neighbourhood, though some of the smaller towns were to be visited as well. In South Australia the original plan was carried out to the letter. In addition to his engagements at Adelaide, Dale preached and spoke at Angaston, Truro, Kapunda, and Gawler. He was able to get through his work without difficulty, and also to see a good deal of the country and the people. In Victoria and New South Wales he was less fortunate. When he reached Melbourne the hot weather had set in; but after days of oppressive heat the temperature fell thirty or forty degrees in the course of a few hours, and the sudden change brought on inflammation in the leg, attended by weakness and pain. All engagements were cancelled; and when he began to recover, his doctor ordered him to spend a week at Beaconsfield, among the hills, 1200 feet above the sea. The mountain air, the rest, and the quiet soon brought him round. After losing ten or eleven days, he was able to go on with his work, and he arranged to return after his visit to New South Wales, and to make up for the time that he had lost. But at Sydney he was again disabled for a week, though the attack was less severe. There he was compelled to leave some of his work undone, for he was due in Victoria, at

[1] *Impressions of Australia*, p. 258.

Geelong, and at Ballarat, in the first week of December, and there was no margin of time on which he could draw. He was able, however, before leaving New South Wales to visit Katoomba, in the Blue Mountains, and Bathurst, and to make a second expedition to Newcastle and Maitland. When he returned to Melbourne he was far from well, but he would not give in. Addressing a great meeting of young men on "A Strong Christianity," he illustrated his text. Unable to stand without support, he rested one knee on a chair, and spoke for nearly an hour. Another incident during his visit has not been forgotten. He was preaching in the spacious church at Collins Street, and was afraid that his voice had been affected by his illness. So he began by saying: "If there is any man in this building who cannot hear me distinctly, let him say so." The doors were open, the vestibules were full, and on the fringe of the crowd stood drovers and women of the town, drawn in by curiosity to see what was going on; once inside, they stayed to the end, fascinated by his eloquence.

Any attempt to estimate the results of the visit in its effect on the life of the colonial churches would be misleading and presumptuous. But it is clear that the impression produced both at Adelaide and at Sydney was deeper than at Melbourne. This is easily intelligible. At Adelaide the churches were already stirred when he came by the associations and memories of their Jubilee. His influence was continuous; and a city of 100,000 inhabitants is more easily reached and moved than one of four times its size. But in work of this kind the spirit and the temper of the people count for much, and at Sydney, in spite of interrupted service and impaired health, he left a blessing behind him.

He himself observed a distinct diversity in the religious conditions of the three colonies. In Victoria he found a reaction after a period of unbelief which had disturbed even the Evangelical churches there, though it had left the adjacent colonies almost untouched.

When I was in Victoria at the close of 1887—after the

secular system had been in existence for fourteen years—the dark waters which for a time threatened to submerge the faith of its people had sunk. But even then I could see traces of past troubles. I noticed that whenever, in a speech or a sermon, I approached a question of apologetics, or adventured into the tropical region of dogmatic controversy, the attention of the audience became keener; sometimes there were indications of suppressed excitement.

My experience in South Australia and in New South Wales was very different. The people were not uninterested in speculative controversies, but they were most deeply moved by expositions and arguments which dealt with those supreme truths of the Christian revelation which have a place in all the creeds, and by appeals to those central elements of the ethical and spiritual life which are common to the devout of all churches, and which, through all vicissitudes of human speculation, remain unchanged. And in New South Wales I found such a deep and vigorous religious life—such earnestness, generosity, and zeal—that, though a very large number of the people have been lost to the churches, I cannot but believe that before very long they will be recovered.[1]

Had he come ten years earlier, his best work would have been done in Melbourne: now the religious atmosphere of Sydney and Adelaide was more congenial.

There is much in Mr. Searle's letter that Dale would have ascribed to the generous warmth of friendship, but he himself in all humility rejoiced that a work undertaken "with fear and trembling" had been so fully crowned with success.

FROM MR. RICHARD SEARLE

STRANGWAYS TERRACE, N.A.,
3rd October 1887.

Years may dim the first freshness of the joyous time we have recently had, but its deep-toned blessedness will live and last. I don't often wish to speak in public, but I did long to say a word or two at the farewell gathering in North Adelaide Church, not to praise you or Mr. Spicer, but to thank God for the rich blessing He has poured out through the solemn, earnest addresses He enabled you to give us. My heart was full of that one

[1] *Impressions of Australia*, pp. 243, 244.

thought—"supreme thankfulness to Him." He sent you, He helped you, He made you a blessing. My prayer *now* is that God will as greatly bless you in Victoria and New South Wales. You have helped us to realise the reality of "the Unseen" and the nearness of God. You have put old truths in a new light. You have deepened our faith and raised our ideal of the Christian life. Yesterday morning Mr. Hebditch preached us a grand sermon on the individual responsibility of *each* member to Christ's Church, touching most tenderly on the great teachings which God privileged you to utter to us. Be comforted, dear friend, that our prayers follow you.

A friend wrote me a day or two since: "If you never rendered Adelaide any other service, your inducing Dr. Dale to come lays us under a lasting debt of gratitude." I thank God I was persistent in brushing away the difficulties, and also that you did not come *alone.*

TO MR. GEORGE MARRIS

MELBOURNE, *1st December* 1887.

Aged 58. We came through last night from Sydney. Our visit to New South Wales has been almost as remarkable as our visit to South Australia. The assurances which have reached us from all quarters of the spiritual power which has accompanied the services have been very affecting. Ministers have spoken of the blessing which has come to them in a way which has been hard to listen to without tears; and the people have been equally earnest in the expression of their gratitude.

The kindness which we have received has been overwhelming. The Sargoods, with whom we stayed here during the month of October, and with whom we are staying again, would like us to stop with them over Christmas; and the Mullenses of Sydney would have kept us for months if we could have stayed.

But I am now longing to be at home, and am only anxious that the fortnight which we have still to spend here may be as richly blessed as the three months which we have spent already.

Dale, too, was glad that he "had not come alone." Mr. Spicer's companionship was a delight to him, and his help invaluable. In his diary he records again and again, "Spicer spoke admirably." But he regarded Mr. Spicer's example, and the influence of his personal intercourse with ministers and laymen, as even more effective than his

addresses. To many it was a novelty and a surprise that a man in the prime of life, and an active partner in a great firm, should at no slight sacrifice leave his business and all other concerns to spend several months in Australia, engaged in the service of the Congregational churches; and Dale believed that he had given an impulse to the religious life of the laymen in the colonies that would not be spent for many years.

It would be ungracious to omit all reference to the welcome that Dale received from the Australian bishops. On his arrival, Dr. Sandford, the Bishop of Tasmania, received him with great cordiality; so did Dr. Barry of Sydney. At Ballarat, in Dr. Thornton, he found an old friend who was delighted to renew the memories of earlier years at Birmingham. Dr. Kennion, the Bishop of Adelaide, he met on several occasions, and discussed with him many questions relating to religious thought and life in the colonies and at home. Dale came to regard him with strong affection and high esteem, and the bishop's letter, apologising for enforced absence from the farewell meeting, shows that the feeling was not all on one side.

From the Bishop of Adelaide

Bishop's Court, North Adelaide,
16*th December* 1887.

I am sorry that my duties prevent my being present at the meeting to-night at which Dr. Dale is to give his farewell address. I should have liked to have publicly tendered my thanks to him for some of his utterances, which, to my mind, must do great good to the whole Christian community. I should like to have thanked him—as by your permission I beg to do in this letter—as a colonist for the carefulness with which he has avoided saying anything which would raise a feeling of discord between members of my own church in this colony and members of other denominations on subjects which might easily enough have become provocative of grave difficulty. I should like to thank him as a University man for the extremely high place which he has given to the study of theology, and for the strong claim he has made for its greater culture; and I should like to thank him as a Christian man for the extremely beautiful and powerful addresses

which he has given in our city on those fundamental truths of Christianity in which all Christian people find their common hope and their practical agreement. As a Churchman, too, I have found the greatest interest in meeting and conversing with Dr. Dale, and in hearing from himself of his friendship with leading members of the Church of England at home, and of his general sympathy with her work and teaching. Of course there are many points on which we must agree to differ, but these do not prevent my laying emphasis on those in which we agree. Of his conscious or unconscious sympathy with Churchmanship three strong indications have struck me—(1) In his visit to Australia to strengthen the hands of his brethren, in which undoubtedly I trace a "reversion to type"; (2) in the appeal which he made for higher sacramental teaching in a very beautiful address given in the Stow Memorial Church; and (3) in the strong protest which he made against "individualism," which is entirely upon the lines on which we Churchmen are wont to plead for a greater recognition of the corporeity of the Church. I am most thankful to have made acquaintance with some of Dr. Dale's books, one of which was indeed made known to me and strongly pressed upon my attention by a well-known Canon of St. Paul's, London, before I left England, and I shall take care to call the attention of others to the great help to be derived from them, and the high spiritual tone which pervades those I have read.

On 17th December he sailed for home with his wife and daughter in the *Carthage*, to return by the Suez Canal; Mr. and Mrs. Spicer had already left for Samoa. The last entry in his Australian diary ends with the words, *Deo gratias*. He was glad to do the work, but thankful that it had come to an end.[1]

On the way home, especially after an excursion from Colombo, he suffered a good deal from the complaint that had troubled him in Australia; but once through the Red Sea, and in a cooler air, he steadily recovered health and vigour. But even at Valetta, where they touched, the ship's doctor advised him not to go on shore.

[1] During his visit Dale preached thirty-eight times and gave twenty-five addresses—not reckoning short, informal speeches. In the capital of each colony he spoke at a Communion service on the idea of the Lord's Supper, and also delivered an address at a ministers' conference in reply to questions.

CHAPTER XXII

DRIFTING APART

The welcome home—Declines a Theological Chair—The Education Commission: Draft Report—Dale's amendments—The Minority Report—The Conservative scheme for Free Education—Dale's view of the position—His defence of Mr. Chamberlain—Reply to misconception—Still adheres to the secular system—The vote of thanks at the Congregational Union—Mr. Crossley's attack—The Congregational Union and Irish policy—Dale withdraws from the Union meetings—Life at Llanbedr—Reviews his preaching and its defects—*The Living Christ and the Four Gospels*—Two missionary sermons—The basis of faith—Faith and the Bible—A local illustration—The historical trustworthiness of the New Testament.

THE ship reached Plymouth on Friday 23rd January, and even in the early hours of a winter morning Dale found himself in the midst of friends who had come from Birmingham and elsewhere, not merely to greet him and his companions, but to relieve them of the trouble that awaits the traveller at his journey's end. He went straight to Birmingham; preached on the Sunday morning, and attended the meetings of the Education Commission in the following week. As soon as the Town Hall could be secured, a meeting was held to welcome him back, and to present him with an address of congratulation. Such compositions too often waste the parchment on which they are engrossed; but in this instance both the text and its setting were genuine works of art. The pages of the address were bound in vellum and clasped with silver; and the portions of the text were surrounded by designs in water-colours, illustrating the various stages of the Australian journey, or representing some of the

1888. Aged 58.

scenes with which Dale's life had been most closely associated. Every sketch was skilfully executed: the minutest details were carried out with equal care.

One incident of the evening may be recalled. Speaking at a farewell meeting at Adelaide, Dale had contrasted the free expression of feeling that he had noticed in the Australian colonies with the reluctance of the average Englishman to display the affection that he really feels.

> I am sometimes in the habit, when I am at home, of saying that with many great and noble qualities, we of the English race are conspicuous for one great defect. We are afraid to tell other people how much affection, and how much esteem, and how much respect we cherish for them. I sometimes quote a phrase which I found somewhere a great many years ago—"Love me, and tell me so"—and I am inclined to think that on the other side of the world English people need to be reminded of the duty of letting those whom they love know of their affection.

As he entered the Hall that night, the first thing that he saw was the motto—displayed in large letters right along the front of the gallery facing the platform—"We love you, and we tell you so." A reference to the words by one of the speakers brought the audience to their feet in a tumult of affectionate enthusiasm. Altogether it was a grand home-coming.

Dale had taken up his work immediately, but almost as soon as he had gathered the threads into his hands, he had to deal with a proposal which cost him much thought and anxiety. The Council of New College—the most ancient and illustrious of the Congregational colleges—invited him to fill the Theological Chair. The Principal, Dr. Newth, with characteristic generosity, offered to resign his post if the invitation of the Council shouid be accepted, so that the Headship and the Theological Professorship might be held together. The proposal was made by a deputation consisting of Dr. Kennedy, the Rev. J. C. Harrison, and the Rev. A. Rowland. Dale met them at the Memorial Hall, and heard what they had to say in support of their project. But after taking some days for

consideration, he came to the conclusion that he was not competent to discharge the duties of the post; and in the following letter addressed to Dr. Kennedy he declined the offer on that ground.

TO THE REV. DR. KENNEDY

24th March 1888.

The proposals which you submitted to me last Monday week were too grave to be hastily accepted or hastily declined.

It has long been my conviction that ever since the great Evangelical Revival of the last century to which our churches owe the recovery of spiritual life and energy after a prolonged period of decay and desolation, Systematic Theology has had no adequate place either in our theological colleges or in the studies of our ministry. During the last thirty years there has been a general disposition among both our ministers and the members of our churches to depreciate its value, and even to regard it as unfriendly to a free and generous development of the Christian life. To the earlier neglect and to the recent disparagement of Christian Dogma as a scientific study I attribute very much of the poverty and confusion of theological thought, very much of the religious uncertainty, and some of the more serious defects in the practical religious life of our churches which are causing anxiety to many—and to some serious alarm.

To remedy this unhappy condition of things, it is of the first importance that in all our colleges the chair of Systematic Theology should be filled by a man whose knowledge of his own subject and whose general learning and intellectual force should command not only the confidence but the intellectual reverence of his students. And if this is true in relation to all our colleges, it is especially true in relation to a college having such a history and such a position as your own.

I had, therefore, to consider first of all whether I had in any degree the qualifications which would justify me in accepting your invitation; and whether my own adverse judgment on this question expressed in our interview at the Memorial Hall should give way under the pressure of the generous confidence of your Council in my fitness for the position. After repeated and anxious consideration I am still of opinion that I am incompetent to fill a chair of Systematic Theology in such a college as yours, and at such a time as this. It is true that throughout my ministry I have had a great interest in Dogmatic studies—an interest which has sometimes kindled into a passion;

and that I have given a considerable amount of time and thought to some provinces of Dogmatic investigation. But with a congregation like that of which I have been the minister for so many years, and with the varied engagements which—wisely or unwisely—I have permitted to absorb a large share of my strength, it has been impossible for me to become a theological scholar. I have studied Dogma in order to form and enrich my own thought and to guide my ministry; but my studies have not qualified me for a theological chair.

The question then had to be considered whether it might not still be my duty to accept the chair and do my best—even though my very best would be certain to fall far short of my conception of what the work of the Professor of Theology at New College ought to be; but my judgment is clear that if I attempted to discharge duties which I am sure are so far beyond my knowledge and my powers, I should render no real service to the college, and should dishonour the great subject whose claims I am anxious to vindicate.

. . . The Council have done me a great honour by offering me an appointment of such dignity and responsibility; my sense of the greatness of the position compels me respectfully and gratefully to decline it.

The effect of the letter was not such as Dale anticipated. It did not shake the conviction of the Council that he was the man for the post; they were sure that he would satisfy them, if he did not satisfy himself. They repeated their invitation with increased urgency, but without effect. Dale was not shaken in his determination. In his reply he had confined himself to the one question—whether he could undertake the duties of the chair with any hope of success; now, finding his own opinion on that point set aside, he turned to other matters which he had deliberately excluded from the former inquiry. Of these secondary considerations one, taken alone, presented an insuperable difficulty. His relation to Mansfield College, and the responsibilities he had incurred through its foundation, were such, he felt, as to preclude him from accepting a professorship in any other college of the denomination. He had advocated the Oxford scheme with all the influence at his command. He had induced others to associate themselves with him in the enterprise.

To accept such an invitation as this would be to desert his friends and the work to which he was pledged. To serve both colleges with a divided allegiance was impossible. If he went to London, he must abandon Oxford. Mansfield College in that case would lose the help that he might hope to render it at Carr's Lane. The objection was crucial, and was felt to be so. No further effort was made to modify his decision, and so ended the last definite attempt to remove him from Birmingham. Even then it was late to think of change.

When Dale returned to the Royal Commission, he found it at work upon the draft report submitted by the Chairman. Some subjects had already been dealt with; but he was in time to take part in the discussions relating to the most important questions brought under their consideration. He did not regard himself—he was not regarded by others—merely as a guardian of denominational interests. He had been nominated as a representative Nonconformist, and in that capacity it was his duty to expose the injustice to which Nonconformists are subjected under the established system of education, and to resist any proposals that would add to their grievances. But he sat there also as a citizen, anxious to secure the best education possible for every child in the kingdom, and with the experience gained during ten laborious years on the Birmingham School Board. He desired not only to maintain the rights of the Nonconformist, but the rights of the parent, the teacher, and the child; of the questions in which he was most deeply concerned some indeed belonged to the sects, but far more belonged to the school.

To enter at any length into the details of the debates would be an endless and a fruitless task. It will be enough to indicate, in the briefest way, some of the positions which he maintained in relation to some matters of primary importance.

While acknowledging the impulse given to popular education by the Act of 1870, he was not wholly satisfied with its policy or its methods. He desired a system

more flexible, more elastic. The stereotyped "standards," each with its rigid limits, and the principle of "payment by results," which apportioned a large part of the Government grant by success or failure in a single examination, inflicted, as he believed, the most serious injury on the quality of the education given in the schools. The system worked badly at both ends of the scale: it was unjust to clever children, and cruel to the dull. The school course was practically determined by the requirements of the Code. The teachers, shut in, as it were, between four walls, could not safely venture into open country beyond the fixed limits. They were tempted, even encouraged, to disregard the awakening of intellectual interest in order to attain the mechanical accuracy that secures a "pass." Children with brains they might safely neglect; the school was in no danger of being fined by their failure. It was the slow and the backward scholars that they had to think of, and to drag them up to the line at any cost. And so the children who were fit for more advanced work were held back by the laggards; and through lack of the thorough training from which they had most to gain, their intelligence was apt to be superficial; while the dull were unduly forced in acquiring a formal and mechanical knowledge. Even when the temptation was resisted by teachers and managers, the system was still mischievous, since it set before them a false educational aim. It is not safe to steer by a false compass, even when its defect is known. The hostility expressed by the great majority of teachers to the existing system he regarded as an additional reason for abandoning it; for their disaffection and discontent could not fail to injure the efficiency of the schools.

The fate of the amendments relating to this subject which he proposed in the Commission disappointed him. In discussion several of his colleagues had condemned "payment by results," and had expressed their desire to substitute inspection, in part at least, for examination. But when it came to the vote, they shrank from so decisive a change, and he carried with him in the division

only Lord Norton, Mr. J. G. Talbot, and Mr. Heller—the teachers' representative. His proposal to replace the "standards" by a graduated system of instruction, though defeated, found more support; but even in that case he was outvoted by nine against six.

He was defeated again, though only by one vote, in an attempt to modify the pupil-teacher system. After the main issue had been decided, and the majority had voted that children should still be employed to teach other children, and that they might be engaged at the age of thirteen, he proposed a qualifying clause providing that they should not be permitted to take part in the actual work of teaching under the age of fifteen. He succeeded in carrying two amendments, fixing the minimum age for half-time exemption in districts other than rural districts at eleven, and the minimum for full-time exemption at thirteen; in country districts the conditions of farm-life were held to require larger concessions.

Among the grievances put in evidence before the Commission by Nonconformist witnesses was the training-college system as now established—almost entirely residential, and for the most part under rigid denominational restrictions. It was shown conclusively that the hardship of which Nonconformists complained was not imaginary, and that in many parts of the country they were practically excluded from the teaching profession. The injustice was one which Dale felt keenly; he was anxious to deal with it. But to propose a resolution avowedly hostile to the denominational system seemed to him impolitic; it could not succeed, and was certain to irritate. He preferred, therefore, to suggest that the experiment of day-training colleges should be tried on a limited scale, to test how far such a scheme was practicable; but even this slight concession was refused by the dominant majority.

These were the most important points on which he made proposals of his own. For the most part he acted with Mr. Lyulph Stanley—for whose ability and grasp of

educational problems he came to have the highest admiration—and with Mr. Henry Richard. Often, on questions of administration and method, they were found on different sides; but whenever the issue lay between the denominational and the national system, between the demands of the clergy and the rights of the citizen, they were never disunited. To the efforts made by Canon Gregory, Lord Harrowby, and others, to strengthen the denominational bias of the draft report, they offered a resolute though unavailing resistance. Again and again in controversies of this kind they found themselves alone; though at times the zeal of the majority proved too extreme for some of its members, and on one occasion Dale and his friends were reinforced by Bishop Temple and Archdeacon Smith in opposition to a declaration that religion supplied the only sure foundation of morality. But for the most part in this stage of the struggle their position was that of a small minority, defeated at every turn but not daunted, and content to wait with patience for victory, though deferred.

The report as finally adopted by the majority of the Commissioners was not accepted by all. The original draft contained much that was objectionable to the minority; and it had been modified in such a way as to widen party divisions. Eight members, therefore, signed a minority report of no great length, but indicating in general terms the points of agreement and of difference. Five of their number also published another report, dealing in far greater detail with the question in all its aspects. Dale with Mr. Lyulph Stanley signed the draft on which this report was based; he wrote the chapters on Religious Instruction, Moral Training, and Nonconformist Grievances, and also a Memorandum on the Attendance at Sunday Schools of Children attending Public Elementary Schools. His reply to Mr. Richard, who thought that he might have dealt more briefly with the subject of Religious Instruction by omitting evidence which he had set out at length, illustrates his anxiety to deal fairly with opinions which were not his own.

To Mr. Henry Richard

May 1888.

Of course I submit wholly to your judgment, and am prepared to drop the whole of the evidence. The considerations on the other side are these :—

(1) I think we ought gravely and fully to state the case on this subject. Its importance we recognise as fully as our colleagues of the majority. (2) Our own people do not know how large a place the religious instruction holds in schools, either voluntary or board. (3) The statement of the case shows that in Church of England and Catholic schools we have a second and a third religious establishment. (4) Though to this I do not attach much value, as I strongly dislike "undenominational" teaching, it seems fair to the large body of our party who believe in teaching of that kind to let them have the support which comes from the evidence on behalf of Boards.

With the publication of this report his work on the Commission came to an end.

It may be convenient at this point—slightly anticipating the order of time—to deal with the last controversy on the education question in which Dale took part. When Lord Salisbury's Government brought forward their Free Education Bill in 1891, the Nonconformists as a body resisted the measure, on the ground that it did not provide for public control of the schools that were to profit by the increased grant of public money. 1891.

For some time Dale kept clear of the conflict, though he wrote to Mr. Chamberlain, criticising the methods of the Bill, and suggesting ways in which some of its faults as an educational measure might be mended. He would have been glad to do nothing more; but when asked for his opinion, he could not refuse to give it. So he examined the plan, in principle and in detail, in a letter first addressed to his friend Mr. Colman—one of the members for Norwich—but afterwards published in the *Independent* and elsewhere.[1] The details of his criticism may be disregarded; it is necessary to deal only with the main issue.

[1] *The Independent*, 26th June 1891.

He was already familiar with the problem. The difficulty of combining a system of Free Education with the continuance of voluntary schools had been discussed at length by the minority of the Royal Commission before they framed their report; it had proved insoluble, and they found themselves unable to suggest any scheme that would not be open to grave objections. But now the position of affairs was changed. A definite scheme had been offered to the nation, for establishing a system of Free Education, but also intended to assist voluntary schools—and to assist them without lessening their freedom. Nonconformists must make their choice between two evils. They might accept the Bill—as an imperfect and unsatisfactory measure—for the sake of Free Education; or they might resist, and possibly help to reject it, even at the cost of deferring a reform to which they were friendly. Dale declared his own preference without hesitation.

I agree with the criticisms of the Bill contained in a paper just issued by the National Education Association; but it is necessary to distinguish between defects which are inevitable in any solution of the problem and defects of a different kind. For example, I strongly object to granting public money to any school not under public management; but the very aim of the Bill is to secure Free Education in denominational as well as in board schools. The absence of any provision for the public management of denominational schools is therefore one of the conditions imposed on the framers of the measure. For my part I am well content that for the present no attempt should be made to secure public control. Those of us who believe in it are not strong enough to insist on any effective application of our principle, and I do not care to have a mere illusory arrangement. From the absence of public control other evils must follow; but these are involved in the very terms of the problem which the Government have attempted to solve.

It is easy to criticise this measure, but those who criticise it should be prepared to show that under existing circumstances it is possible to construct a scheme for Free Education that would be less objectionable. At present the denominational schools are too strong for it to be possible to transfer the power of their managers to School Boards. We may regret this—I regret it very much—but the fact cannot be denied; and the question is

whether, if this fact is recognised, any fairer and less objectionable measure for securing Free Education can be constructed than that which has been proposed by the Government. If not, the choice lies between accepting the main outlines of their Bill and postponing Free Education indefinitely. The second alternative I am not prepared to approve.

It is probable that this advice would have provoked less resentment had it not been coupled with a defence of Mr. Chamberlain, who, as Dale thought, had been most unjustly charged with "apostasy" on this question. He pointed out that, two years at least before the split in the Liberal party, Mr. Chamberlain had been anxious to secure Free Education, even at the cost of an increased grant to voluntary schools without any enlargement of outside control. Mr. Chamberlain had made this proposal in 1884 and 1885, when he was "one of the most powerful and most trusted of the Radical leaders." And though the plan had been rejected by the Liberal Federation at Bradford, there had been no talk then of "apostasy" or of anything like it.

The letter—especially after Mr. Chamberlain had used it in his own defence in the House of Commons—brought down a storm of denunciation—reckless in some cases, ignorant in others. But of such attacks Dale for some time took no heed. The course of events showed that he had grasped the facts of the situation. He had asserted that Nonconformists were not strong enough to secure any system of genuine control; it proved that they were not strong enough even to demand it. The resolution moved by Mr. Fowler, representing the Liberal leaders, was impotent and indefinite: it asked for local supervision; it did not venture to ask for local control; and supervision without control—oversight without authority—must inevitably degenerate into a mere mockery. But in the autumn of 1891 finding that his opinions were still misrepresented—and notably in a paper read before the Congregational Union at Southport—he felt that it was due to himself, and due to his friends, to check the persistent endeavour to represent him as unwilling to place denominational schools

under public control. He therefore brought the speaker to book, taking the opportunity to restate and reassert his own position.[1]

A single sentence, torn from its surroundings and divorced from its context, had been quoted to prove that "Dr. Dale in 1891" was "less advanced than Dr. Temple in 1856." He had said: "For my part I am well content that for the present no attempt should be made to secure public control." Why? Because he was opposed to public control? Because he refused to admit, what Dr. Temple acknowledged, that "if the religious communities are to govern the schools, it will follow that they must pay for them"? The very next sentence showed that it was not so—that it could not be so. "For," he continued, "those of us who believe in it are not strong enough to insist on any effective application of our principle, and I do not care to have a mere illusory arrangement." His assailant, who had not the grace to apologise, attempted to justify himself by saying that he had quoted Dale's words "verbatim"—a defence that implied exceptional obtuseness or an abnormal ignorance of the ethics of quotation. Dale's letter removed the last shadow of excuse for any such suggestion in future.

> What Nonconformists have been asking for throughout the Education struggle has been, not the mere "*supervision*" by a local representative authority of schools receiving public grants, but the transfer of the *management* of the schools to a local representative authority, which is a wholly different matter. This, and this alone, should satisfy the Nonconformists; and to any illusory scheme, which would make it more difficult to secure their ultimate object, they should offer strenuous opposition. . . .
>
> It is because I care so much for real and effective popular management that I was "content" that no attempt was made last Session to give us a form of popular control that would have been certain to be illusory.

At the same time he indicated the lines on which the battle should be fought out.

[1] *Independent*, 23rd October 1891.

We are not strong enough, I say, to secure what we want; but I think that Nonconformists should make up their minds to move towards it. Their immediate demand, in my judgment, should be for a school under the management of a local representative authority within the reach of every child in England; and, further, the local authority should be required to find school places for all the children whose parents desire it, whether there is room for them or not in existing denominational schools. To secure even this moderate demand will require a severe struggle; but if the English Nonconformists really care to fight the battle of educational freedom, the victory will come to them at last.

Only one more addition—and that a brief one—is necessary. It has been implied, and even asserted, that before the end of his life Dale withdrew from the position that he had long held on the question of religious instruction. Nothing could be further from the fact. He stood then where he had stood twenty years before.[1] For a time, it is true, he had argued in favour of Bible reading in the schools; but the Bible was to come in, not as a book of revelation, but as a masterpiece of literature. That time had long since passed; he looked back on it with humiliation and regret. And although in later years, reluctantly, and to avert the disruption of the Liberal party in Birmingham, he had agreed to offer no resistance to the compromise under which the Bible was read in the schools, his own conviction was unchanged; and he made no secret of it. He accepted the compromise, lest the rejection of it should lead to something worse—an attempt to give religious instruction in the schools.

Dale's services on the Commission as a representative 1888.
of the Nonconformist churches were heartily recognised, especially by those who understood against what odds he had to contend. At the autumn session of the Congregational Union, held at Nottingham, an expression of gratitude to him—and to Mr. Richard who had died not long before—was coupled with a protest against the retrograde policy advocated by the majority of their colleagues. Through the irony of events this very incident

[1] See his own declaration: *Independent*, 4th May 1893.

led to his withdrawal from the meetings of the Union. Dr. Guinness Rogers, who proposed the resolution, scrupulously avoided any phrase or allusion that might give offence. But Mr. Edward Crossley, who followed him, described the Liberal Unionists as "chained to the Tory chariot," and asserted that they had "denied their Liberalism." His words were followed by loud protests and louder applause. He repeated them: "I say it again—who have denied their principles"; a fresh demonstration of feeling followed. The Chairman, Dr. Bruce, intervened; but the mischief was done: the assembly had unmistakably declared its hostility to the Liberal Unionists.

Dale's position was one of extreme difficulty. He was expected to acknowledge the vote; but if he remained and spoke, he must have replied to the attack; it would have been his duty to vindicate himself and those who shared his convictions on the Irish question from the charges that had been flung at them. Such controversies, he felt, were out of place at the meetings of the Congregational Union. He was loath to embroil the assembly, or to be drawn into conflict with some of his closest friends, especially into a conflict that could have no result but to embitter feeling. Silence, on the whole, seemed the wiser course, and he left the hall before he could be called upon to speak.

Taken alone, Mr. Crossley's speech, and the demonstration it provoked, however discourteous, would not have affected Dale's relations to the Congregational Union. But during the same week a special meeting of its members was held to pass a resolution condemning the Irish policy of the Government; it was held with the concurrence of the Committee, and the ordinary session was adjourned to enable ministers and delegates to be present. Such a precedent seemed to him perilous in the extreme. Once admitted into the discussions of the Congregational Union, questions of this order, he felt, were sure to recur; and the only way of escape from distasteful and fruitless strife lay in withdrawal from the Union meetings until the

cause of division should have passed away. He therefore wrote to the *Nonconformist*, explaining the position in which he found himself, and the decision to which he had come. The letter concluded as follows :—

I do not suppose that anybody would contend that the Congregational Union should be regarded as a court of review which is under obligation to discuss at its annual assemblies the morality of all the political events of the year; and, in my humble opinion, the administration of Ireland is not a subject on which it was necessary for the Union to speak.

But the majority must judge for themselves. In their judgment they would have failed in their duty if they had not secured from the ministers and delegates attending the Union a resolution on this question. The resolution was passed, not, indeed, at an ordinary meeting of the Union, but at a special meeting of its members. The meeting was proposed by a committee appointed by the assembly; and the proposal was sanctioned by the assembly.

It remains for those of us who regard the meeting with disapprobation to recognise the conscientiousness of those from whom we differ, while we regret their judgment. Those of us who, to use the words of one of the speakers at the special meeting, "must be brushed aside in the interests of freedom and of progress," should submit to the decision of our brethren without resentment.

The Liberal party has been rent in two by this great and difficult question. The protracted discussion of it has done nothing to conciliate differences of opinion, and has created a mutual bitterness of feeling which makes ultimate agreement extremely uncertain. Now that the discussion has practically found its way into the Congregational Union, there is danger that if it is continued the Congregational ministers and churches of England will also be divided into two hostile camps. But it takes two to make a quarrel. We who are in the minority must find some way of escaping from responsibility for the opinions of our brethren without coming into conflict with them, either at ordinary or special meetings of the ministers and delegates attending the Union. In a few years we may hope that the question will cease to divide us, and I am anxious that when that time comes neither party may have to regret words of bitterness spoken of the other. I am content, meanwhile, so far as the Congregational Union is concerned, to be "brushed aside in the interest of freedom and of progress." [1]

[1] *Nonconformist* and *Independent*, 18th October 1888.

The letters that follow were written to Dr. Guinness Rogers—the first two at the time of his withdrawal; the third more than two years later, when, after Dr. Hannay's death, with great reluctance and in response to urgent appeal, he appeared on the Union platform for the last time to propose a resolution expressing the sorrow of its members at their loss.

TO THE REV. DR. GUINNESS ROGERS

NOTTINGHAM, *October 11th* 1888.

Your letter did not reach me till after you had left last night. I was much moved by it. I wish that it were possible for me to tell you that it had affected my judgment as much as it has touched my heart.

With regard to the speech of Mr. Edward Crossley I need hardly say much. There was something humorous in his attack on the Unionists while he was seconding a resolution which recognised the value of the services of the minority of the Education Commission. Mr. Lyulph Stanley, to whom we owe very much more than to any one else, is an energetic Unionist; and if I cared to appreciate the relative services of the members of the minority I should be able to show that those who do not follow Mr. Gladstone were, to say the least, not less laborious or less staunch than their colleagues. But Mr. Crossley's speech and even its reception by the meeting were made of very little importance by what followed. I could not, of course, have acknowledged the resolution without discussing Mr. Crossley's position; and as in my judgment it is no part of the duty of the Congregational Union to consider whether Liberal Unionists—in or out of Parliament—have "sacrificed their Liberalism and denied their principles," I was compelled to be silent. I am sorry not to have been able to speak. I wanted to say something of the services of my colleagues on the Commission; to point out what seems to me to be our true policy, and to express my gratitude for the extreme generosity with which you and Bruce and the assembly, by adopting the resolution, had recognised my own endeavours to serve the interests of education and of religious freedom. But to lose the opportunity of making a speech even on subjects about which one cares a great deal is not a serious matter.

But the action of the assembly with regard to the meeting of this afternoon was really serious. A committee of the assembly

proposed that a meeting should be held of ministers and delegates for discussing the Irish question, and requested the Chairman of the Union to preside at it; the assembly approved the proposal and determined to adjourn at an unusual hour, so that the ordinary meeting should not interfere with the special meeting. To all intents and purposes the meeting this afternoon is a meeting of the Congregational Union, and will be so regarded by the public.

Whatever may be the resolutions adopted by the meeting, I regard this as a course full of peril. The resolutions which are likely to be passed, and the speeches likely to be made, will commit the Union to a political position which, on moral grounds, I regard with strong disapproval. That you and others whom I esteem should regard the course of the official Liberal party during the last two years with satisfaction is sufficient proof that the subject is one on which honourable men may differ.

20th October 1888.

I am glad that you have so little to regret in the letter to the *Nonconformist*. You will not wonder that I was just a little amused at your saying that we must take care not to sever religion from politics. I can sever religion from no political question; it does not follow that every political question is the proper concern of the Union. There are many grave things into which religion enters with which the Union has nothing to do.

I fear, however, that you may have drawn an incorrect inference from the letter to the *Nonconformist*. Of course I do not write to the paper as I write to you. I have done very little for the Union for a great many years, and never did much, but I trust it will become more and more a real spiritual force. And if I drop out for a time I want to drop out quietly. I cannot at present see any other course. To discuss the Irish question either in general or special meetings seems to me a course full of danger; and my judgment to-day, therefore, is my judgment of last week—to be no party to the discussion of it. But how I can be present and yet silent I do not see. Put the case the other way. Suppose that the Union passed a resolution congratulating the Government on the remarkable diminution of boycotting and on the letting of derelict farms, and transmitted it to Mr. Balfour, could you, with your views, be present at the discussion leading up to that resolution and be silent? If you felt it a duty to be silent, could you with a quiet conscience be present at the Union meetings?

I have been very unhappy about the whole business. It was

a painful thing to separate myself from the Liberal Association; it is infinitely more distressing to have the conviction forced on me that I must for a time isolate myself from the Union and from other Nonconformist assemblies of a kindred sort. I went to Nottingham last week with a very joyful heart, believing that, with the cessation of the heavy claims of the Commission and with returning strength I might very soon be able to do very much more for the Union than I have done for a long time. I came home very sad.

But, as I said in my letter last week, this is for you only. You must know my heart. I have not said these things to other people.

25th February 1891.

The request of the Union Committee seems to leave me no choice. I do not see how it is possible for me to decline. And yet I accept with misgiving. For I suppose that it is as likely as not that the Union will be asked to pass a resolution declaring that Mr. Gladstone's letter has secured a great triumph for Christian morality by removing Mr. Parnell from the leadership of the Irish party and putting in his place the men who after the divorce mocked at the scruples of Nonconformist fanatics and professed their unabated confidence in him; and as I see no reason for breaking through my determination not to discuss Irish matters in the Union, I should have to be silent about my inability to concur in this opinion. However, as I have said, I love and honour the memory of Hannay so much that I do not see how I can decline.

Withdrawal from the Congregational Union brought no sudden and glaring change; its effect was gradual, almost imperceptible. He was already bound for solitary seas; this was another anchor lifted, or rather it was a fresh wind to carry him on his way. With retirement from political life his interest in politics began to fail, and now he ceased to concern himself with denominational affairs, save where they touched religious life and thought. During the next two years he lived much alone; his isolation, and the consciousness of it, grew more and more complete.

It was at this time, too, that he made a second home for himself at Llanbedr, a little Welsh village about eight miles from Barmouth. The place is neither inaccessible

nor unknown to visitors, but it lies away from the beaten track, and is almost untouched by English influence. He spent a holiday there, and was eager to return. The next year a comfortable cottage was rented and furnished, and he would go there, not only in the summer, but whenever he needed a few days' rest and change. But for the distance from Birmingham—and Welsh railways take their time—the place was all that he could desire. The hills were close at hand, with gentle slopes of easy ascent, and commanding a wide expanse of mountain and moor and sea. The winds were soft and the sunshine was generous. He took kindly to the people as well as to the place; and the life of a village, which he saw for the first time from the inside, afforded him endless amusement and delight. On the Sunday he would listen to the vicar at the English church, whose stock of sermons soon became familiar. If he went to the Welsh chapel, the text was given out in English for his benefit, so that, as he said, he had something good to think about though he could not follow the preacher. If he was unwell, he called in the local doctor—a man of skill and resource—who discussed his symptoms in English, but relapsed into Welsh when he wrote out the directions on the medicine-bottle. Out of doors there was the garden, with its wealth of flowers—and weeds; and in the river were salmon that sulked in state beneath the bridge close by, trout that would not take the fly, eels that would take anything. He soon became deeply interested in the faith of the people, as shaped by the influences of Calvinistic Methodism. He attended their meetings, listened to their ministers, and wrote more than one careful study of what he had seen and heard. He kept open house—open to all; and his friendliness went far to break down the barrier of suspicion and reserve that keeps the two races strangers and apart. In a very real sense, he had the freedom of the place.

Llanbedr also led to a new friendship of ever-increasing intimacy and affection. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Davies were already known to him through their connection with his friends the Colmans; they had met as guests at

Carrow or at Corton. Their home at Treborth, in Anglesea, on the Menai Straits, was not very far from Llanbedr; it made a pleasant break in the journey to Birmingham. One visit led to another, and he often spent a few days under their roof. He was always sure of a welcome: he felt that he could go there even in times of weakness and suffering. It was a large household, full of bright and buoyant life that gave him incessant delight. The sons and the daughters of the house, no less than their parents, made him their friend. Treborth and its associations are points of light in the shadow of his later years.

Llanbedr was friendly to meditation, and Dale, ever ready to commune with the inner spirit, spent many hours in thought. He would take his Bible and read book after book with minute care, noting the truths on which, as it seemed to him, he had dwelt too lightly, and the duties that had received inadequate recognition in his ministry. Nor did he stop there. He also reviewed the spirit and the method of his preaching. Preaching, he felt, in the future would be his chief, perhaps his only work. His failure to reach men and to move them as he desired weighed upon him; and with unflinching self-scrutiny he set himself to discover how a fuller success might yet be won. He kept no diary until a later period, but he began about this time to set down in writing his thoughts on these subjects. The notes that follow cover a period of several months, but it would be inconvenient to disregard their intimate connection.

I have been thinking much and with much concern about my preaching. It has a fatal defect. It is wanting in an element which is indispensable to real success. I do not think that I should state the exact truth if I said that I was not anxious for the conversion and perfection of individual men, and cared only for setting forth the truth. But I fear that the truth occupies too large a place in my thought, and that I have been too much occupied with the instrument—the Divine instrument—for effecting the ends of the ministry, too little with the actual persons to be restored to God. This comes from a moral and spiritual condition which involves serious guilt. God forgive me! It is even now possible through the Divine grace for this

sin to disappear. It lies deep. The particular result of it which I have marked is but one of its evil effects. I have again and again attempted to discover how to do my work more effectively—have honestly tried to make everything contribute to the usefulness of my preaching; but the central evil has remained: it is a want of conformity to the mind of Christ, a hardness of heart which must be subdued and melted by the grace and truth of God, if the few remaining years of my ministry—few at the most—are to have a different character from those which have gone before.

To what extent have I failed for another reason—not recognising in thought the discontent, the yearning for an unknown God, the reaching towards Christ, of many who are not decidedly Christians?

I felt rather strongly towards the close of last year that in one respect among others my ministry—especially of late years—had been gravely defective. I have striven to press home upon men and to illustrate the very central contents of the Christian gospel; but I have not recognised practically the obligation to use in preaching all those secondary powers which contribute to create and sustain intellectual and emotional interest in preaching. The more strenuous intellectual effort, in order to make truth clear and to put it strongly, has not been neglected; but there has not been the legitimate use, either in the choice of subjects or their treatment, of those elements which are of a rhetorical character, and which raise the audience into a condition which is perhaps friendly to the reception of Christian truth. I have a dread of aiming at the "popular" method of treatment, arising from a dread of aiming at "popularity"; but the two aims are wholly distinct, and it has been a fault not to aim at the first. I have set myself to remedy this during the present year, and hope with God's help to succeed.

I fear that I have not secured sufficient variety of subject for the various intellectual, ethical, and religious conditions of the congregation; and during my recent absence from home I drew up a tentative scheme of topics which I will try to work. It covers a month.

(1) Morning: Spiritual, Experimental, Higher Truth.
Evening: Ethical.
(2) Morning: Ethical, Elementary Evangelistic.
Evening: Elementary Experimental.
(3) Morning: Expository, Historical, Ecclesiastical.
Evening: Doctrinal, Evangelistic.
(4) Morning: Doctrinal.
Evening: Evangelistic.

These conclusions are in part the result of meditation suggested by a conversation at the Church Fellowship conference just before I left home. Mr. Mander read a paper on what could be done to contribute to the strength and efficiency of our church life. He began with the pulpit,[1] and the conversation was very much arrested at the first part of his paper. It was urged by several that my preaching moved at a height—intellectual and spiritual—far above that of the congregation generally. The prayers, too, were also too far removed from the actual experience of the people. Hardly any of those present are able to be present at the evening service, and the criticism—which was as kindly as it was frank—was truer of the morning than of the evening services. There was specially a request for more ethical preaching, and a curious, half-suppressed antagonism to Paul. It was a very interesting talk. Notwithstanding the kindness of the dominant element of the criticism—that the sermons have an intellectual, literary, and spiritual quality which commands the sympathy and gratitude of the best and most cultivated, an opinion which it would not be easy to justify to the extent to which it was urged—it pained me a great deal at the time, and kept me awake for many hours. But I ought not to have felt the pain, and I hope to profit by the criticism. The conclusion I reached while away from home was that it was more accurate in its appreciation of defects than it seemed to me at the time, though the positive suggestions for improvement seemed and still seem to me wanting in discernment.

Is it too early to record the hope that God has given to me a new element of power in my preaching? The word which has been often used to denote what critics regarded as the excellence of my preaching and speaking really suggested the qualities in which both had been defective, and the preaching more than the speaking—"stateliness." That is not the characteristic of effective preaching; and it suggests a whole set of intellectual, ethical, and spiritual elements which account for failure. I think that in the sermons of the last two Sundays the "stateliness" has disappeared, and that there has been more of brotherly

[1] A few sentences taken from a letter of Mr. Mander's may serve to indicate what were felt to be defects in Dale's preaching: "In my own estimation he always ranked higher as a teacher than as a preacher of the truth. If I read a sermon which I had previously heard him preach, it always proved superior to what was expected. The delivery had too little variety of tone, and was too impassioned, as a rule, and until his later years was destitute of pathos."

access—intellectual and, if I may so put it, rhetorical access—to the people. The intellectual quality has not, I think, been inferior to what I have usually reached, but on the whole higher; but the "stateliness" has gone. In preparation I aimed at more freedom, and in preaching, God gave it me. But I trust that there was something far more central than a mere rhetorical change. Yesterday was the first Sunday after the issue of the scheme for prayer in the letter prefixed to the Church Manual. I believe that throughout the services there was a new presence of the power of God. May it continue!

At the same time Dale was engaged in preparing the series of lectures contained in *The Living Christ and the Four Gospels*. The volume was not published until the autumn of 1890; but for eighteen months before, the principle asserted and illustrated in the first part of the book—the experimental basis of our faith in Christ—had filled his thought, dominating public utterance and private meditation. Stated briefly, his contention was that faith in Christ is trust in a Person, not belief in a Book; that we believe in Christ, not because we believe the Bible to be supernaturally inspired, but that we believe in the inspiration of Scripture because we believe in Him; that the ultimate foundation of faith is personal knowledge of Christ, and its originating cause the personal testimony of those who in our own time and before it have trusted in Christ and have found their faith verified in spiritual experience.[1]

This truth was no new discovery. Nearly twenty years earlier in an Exeter Hall lecture he had dealt with the same subject in the same way, and had combated the tendency to set the Bible in the place of the Living Christ.[2] The lecture excited such enthusiasm that it was repeated after a short interval. But it is doubtful whether those

[1] Dr. Jowett puts the opposite position so clearly and concisely that it may serve as a useful contrast.—"Is it possible to feel a personal attachment to Christ such as is prescribed by Thomas à Kempis? I think that it is impossible, and contrary to human nature that we should be able to concentrate our thoughts on a person scarcely known to us, who lived 1800 years ago."—*Jowett's Life*, vol. ii. p. 151.

[2] *The Ultimate Principle of Protestantism*, pp. 47-74, and particularly pp. 64-67 and p. 73.

who heard him really grasped his thought. Indeed, one of Dale's friends told him at the time that if the audience had understood his argument, they would have howled him off the platform. The outlook had changed since then. The peril which he had foreseen and had tried to forestall now encompassed belief on every hand. Criticism with its theories had escaped from the study and the lecture-room. The magazine and the newspaper had been pressed into the warfare on either side. The authority and authenticity of the New Testament narrative were exposed to a fierce onslaught; and such an attack, though it might be repelled, was not to be ignored. Even the inland valleys of faith were loud with the voice of the storm. Now, no one could miss the drift of his argument: it might be condemned as conceding too much to unbelief; it could hardly be misunderstood.

1889. Aged 59.

Those who heard the two missionary sermons that he preached in London in the spring of 1889—one for the Wesleyan, the other for the Baptist Society — will remember how the congregations were stirred and swayed as he developed the argument for faith in Christ drawn from the collective experience of the Christian Church. But the two assemblies were not affected in exactly the same way. At Bloomsbury he was conscious as he went along of excitement growing through repression; of double currents, of sympathy and of antagonism, running in opposite directions. At Queen Street — among the Methodists—the whole tide was with him. Midway in his course, as he drew towards the close of a passage of sustained grandeur, recalling the succession of saints and sinners who in their own conscious experience have prolonged the gospel narrative, adding to its records new miracles of mercy and of power, wave upon wave of emotion broke over the assembly.[1] The argument and the appeal exactly suited the genius of Methodism. Those who listened could bear their own testimony: they too had felt, had seen, had known. With them, mind and heart and spirit made one music.

[1] *Fellowship with Christ:* "The Risen Christ," pp. 42, 43.

In the discourses on "The Living Christ and the Four Gospels" delivered to his own congregation Dale had larger scope, and was able to deal in fuller detail with difficulties and objections upon which he could not touch in a single sermon. The book falls into two parts. In the former, he discusses the basis on which Christian faith really rests; in the latter, he illustrates the evidence for the integrity and authority of the Four Gospels. Without attempting any minute analysis, it may be possible to draw attention to those portions of the book which are most characteristic.

Dale asserts here, as he had asserted elsewhere, that controversies as to the date and the authorship of the Gospels do not make faith impossible; they do not even shake it. But how is it that men who are uncertain about the historical trustworthiness of the New Testament books are not uncertain about Christ? This is a summary of his reply.

My first answer to the question was this: That whatever may have been the original grounds of their faith, their faith has been verified in their own personal experience. They trusted in Christ for the remission of sins, and they have been liberated from the sense of guilt; for deliverance from sin, and the chains of evil habits have been broken or loosened, and the fires of evil passion have been quenched or subdued. They trusted in Christ for a firmer strength to resist temptation and to live righteously, and the strength has come. They have received from Him—they are sure of it—a new life, a life akin to the life of God. They have been drawn into a wonderful personal union with Christ Himself; "in Christ" they have found God, and have passed into that invisible and eternal order which is described as "the kingdom of God." Whatever uncertainties there may be about the historical worth of the four narratives which profess to tell the story of Christ's earthly ministry, their faith in Him is firm, because they know by their own experience that the Living Christ is the Lord and Saviour of men.

My second answer to the question was this: That there are Christian men who would say that the representation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Four Gospels appeals, and appeals immediately, to all those elements and powers of life that give

answer to manifestations of the presence of God. They believe in Christ because they see God in Him. They do not ask for proofs that He wrought miracles; He Himself is the great Miracle; He transcends all the miracles attributed to Him by the evangelists. Discussions about the age in which the Gospels were written and about their authorship are of secondary interest; if they were written by unknown men who belonged to the second, the third, or even the fourth generation of Christians, they preserve the substance and give a true account of His earthly history. The story they tell is no involuntary creation of passionate love; much less is it a deliberate invention. The life of the Eternal God is in it.[1]

The argument from experience was one that all could apprehend. But some, when told that their faith rested not upon the Bible, but upon something else, were perplexed if not alarmed. That was not their own opinion. Had they been asked to account for their faith, they would have pointed with assurance to the books of the New Testament as an authority that could not err. They would have declared that the sacred story had made Christ known to them, and that so brought into His presence they had learned to trust in Him for light and for strength: they believed because they had read; such, at least, was their conviction. And yet, under cross-examination, they would have been forced to confess that they had never studied the evidence by which the historical trustworthiness of the evangelists is sustained. And as for inspiration, they would be hard put to it to explain even to themselves the meaning they attached to the term, or to state the grounds on which they held the Scriptures to be "inspired." But failing this, if their faith rested on the Bible — and on nothing more — it must follow that they were resting on the authority of scholars, or on mere tradition.

Dale met the difficulty in a characteristic manner. In practical life, he pointed out, we find many men who with alternatives for choice choose rightly, or when confronted with difficulties meet them wisely, and yet when asked to explain the reasons for their conduct or their choice show

[1] *The Living Christ and the Four Gospels*, pp. 270, 271.

an absolute inability to give a rational and a consistent answer. The parallel holds good in the religious life. Men whose faith is sound and strong are unable to trace the process of its growth, and they mistake the foundation on which it stands.

The real grounds of a man's belief, like the real motives of a man's conduct, are not always known to himself. Let me illustrate what I mean. I know a Nonconformist chapel, in which what may be described as a shallow, semi-elliptical apse behind the platform on which the preacher stands is screened off from the rest of the building by a row of Ionic columns, supporting, or apparently supporting, a massive architrave. A few years ago it became necessary to break through the screen, in order to place part of the organ in the apse. This innovation threatened the destruction of some of those stately columns, which were the pride and admiration of the men by whom the chapel was built; but the catastrophe was averted. All the space that was necessary for the organ was obtained by cutting away the lower half of the two central columns—they looked as if they were stone, they were really of wood—and leaving their two capitals with eight or ten feet of each of the shafts *suspended* to the architrave which they appeared to support. The columns had never supported what they seemed to support; the architrave had always been kept in its place by other means. That the lower half of the shaft of two of them has been removed is now concealed by the organ and its case. The columns are as important and as stately as ever; they still seem to bear up a great weight, but two of them are hanging on to the architrave instead of supporting it. This is bad architecture; but something very like it may be seen in the architecture of human opinions and beliefs. The pillars—apparently of solid marble, really of worm-eaten wood—on which we imagine that some of our most important convictions rest, might be removed, and the convictions would remain firm and unmoved; they really rest on quite other supports—supports which are not apparent to the eye, and which we have never had the penetration to discover. The elaborate reasons, the formal demonstrations, which the intellect regards with pride as a row of stately columns upholding its faith, are *suspended* from the faith which is supposed to rest upon them. Cut through the columns half-way between base and capital, and the faith is undisturbed; but let the strength of the faith itself be impaired, and then the reasons and the demonstrations fall into ruins.[1]

[1] *The Living Christ and the Four Gospels*, pp. 72-74.

The felicity of the illustration is undeniable. The pillars stood behind him as he spoke; their secret was known to most if not to all of his hearers. The fact and the principle could never be dissociated in their minds. The analogy carries conviction where a rigid logic fails.

"Uncertainty with regard to the authorship of the Four Gospels, uncertainty with regard to the dates at which they were written, is not to be regarded as the sign of faltering faith in Christ." Questions of literature should be distinguished from questions of faith. But "though faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may remain firm, while the only story that has come down to us of His earthly ministry is regarded as uncertain, Christian life and thought suffer a loss which cannot be measured." In the remaining lectures, therefore—delivered not on Sundays but on week days—Dale set forth the evidence which sustains the historical trustworthiness of the Gospels. The primary question, in his view, was not literary—not one of authorship—but historical; to determine whether or no "the story of our Lord in the Four Gospels is the story which was told by the Apostles themselves." Here he was on well-trodden ground: he made use of the writings of Salmon, Westcott, Wace, and others; originality of treatment he would have disclaimed. His function was that of the interpreter—to bring the scholar and the people into contact. But he never sinks to the level of the compiler. He looks at the case with his own eyes. As he passes from witness to witness, from church to church, from century to century, that remote and shadowy world takes form and colour from his imaginative force. The issue becomes immediate and real.

The book was most favourably received. The *Guardian* —always generous in its treatment of him—gave it a long and careful review, with much warm commendation qualified by a regret that the historic Church had not received due recognition as the permanent witness to the truth which it had received and handed down. With this one reservation, the reviewer had nothing but praise for

the lectures: his criticism, appreciative even when adverse, was far more welcome than any amount of undiscriminating eulogy.

Among the many letters which came to him after the publication of the lectures was a very cordial one from Dean Church.

FROM THE VERY REV. DEAN CHURCH[1]

21 MARINE PARADE, DOVER,
7th November 1890.

. . . You have brought out, I think, with great force that what we have in the Gospel is not a philosophy nor the result of criticism, but an absolute reality, of the same order and as unique as the Being of God—the Presence of our Lord with our spirit—Person to person, Life to life—which, as long as we obey conscience and do not trifle with our light, is as real as ourselves.

And the second part of the volume seems to me equally excellent. I do not remember seeing anywhere the whole *literary* argument for the Four Gospels better put than in your chapters. You have used materials with great mastery of the whole subject.

In these days, in which a very grave conflict seems impending as to our sacred documents, and perhaps opening into unsuspected issues, I hope your volume will be of much service to comfort and encourage souls who find the mysteries of this world and its mixed light and darkness, a heavy burden.

[1] Dean of St. Paul's.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

Perils of the Congregational system—The International Council—Dale elected President—An attack of illness—His address from the Chair: "The Divine Life in Man"—The relation of Christ to the race—Incarnation and Propitiation—The realisation of Divine Sonship the root of Congregationalism—The Congregational ideal—The Church the leaven in the world's life—How far is the ideal realised?—Central unity—In peril of life—Gradual recovery—His Introduction to the Proceedings of the Council—The mission of Congregationalism—Hostile criticism—A relapse—At Llanbedr—Experiences in suffering—Speaks again in public for the first time.

Aged 61. IN the summer of 1891 an International Council of Congregational churches met in London. It was the first gathering of its kind. The idea had been often mooted, but the project took shape at Melbourne about three years before. The peril to which the Congregational system has always been exposed is that of isolation. Its churches are independent, not only in government but in life. In their experience they too often have illustrated the description contained in the declaration of the Savoy Conference, of churches "sailing each on its own way in the vast ocean of these tumultuating times, and holding out not so much as a light to each other." And although the federations that have sprung up both in Great Britain and in our colonies during the last half century have helped to promote union, the outlook has still been too confined: Congregationalism, among ourselves at any rate, if not in the United States, has been apt to forget that its principles are not for a nation merely but for the world. The presence of delegates from all parts of the

globe, representing churches of many lands and of varied history, showed that Congregationalism was a greater force in the world than some of its sons had conceived.

After conference between the chief representatives, it was decided to nominate Dale for the Presidency. It was an honour which he had not looked for, and he felt the claims of others to be greater than his own. Indeed, there were preachers of more brilliant genius; men who held a higher place in scholarship and in literature, or who had done more for the organisation of the churches of their own order. But taking all gifts and all forms of service into consideration, there was no other man whose activity had moved through so wide a range and at such a uniform height of distinction; none so widely known within the churches and to the world outside; and certainly none who had asserted the principles of Congregationalism with greater courage and conviction. Withdrawal from the Congregational Union had not withdrawn him from the service of his brethren. It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the extent to which his advice was sought by ministers and churches on points of order and administration, as well as in matters of faith, to avert conflict, to dispel suspicion, to restore peace. In many cases even more serious difficulties, involving larger interests, were submitted to him for decision.

In the preliminary arrangements for the business of the assembly he took an active part with Dr. Mackennal, the British Secretary of the Council, and others; they met both in London and at Birmingham to draw up the programme, to choose speakers, and to assign subjects. From the first he set himself to secure that all sections among the delegates should have due consideration; that different nationalities should be fairly represented; that no school of theological thought should be slighted or overlooked. His own duties as President were not forgotten; and though it was not his habit, he jotted down in a note-book suggestions as they occurred, not trusting wholly to the impulse of the moment for doing the right thing.

As yet he himself was full of vigour. During March and April he undertook several important engagements. He lectured at Gordon Hall to women students on "Judgment to Come." In the same week he preached on Wesley and the Methodist Movement in the course of the centenary celebrations. A month later, before the Baptist Home Missionary Society, he delivered the well-known sermon on "Christ and the State," in which he discussed the relation of the Christian Church to political objects.[1] This sermon he himself regarded as the best that he ever preached; and by "best" he meant that he had succeeded in saying what he wished to say on a subject of paramount and permanent interest, and that he had said it in a way likely to carry conviction or at least to compel attention. Those who heard him then, especially in the unpremeditated appeal with which he closed, could have had no anticipation of coming trouble.

But the influenza was sweeping through the country at that time, and towards the end of May, Dale was among the victims. The attack itself was not severe, but it found an ally within the walls in the shape of disease; they made common cause in ravage and ruin. For many weeks the invalid suffered from great prostration. Any exertion found him feeble and left him breathless. He was not allowed to return to work, and as the day fixed for the Council meetings drew near, he had little confidence that he would be able to preside. In case of emergency his address, written long before, was set in type, that Dr. Mackennal might read it if he himself failed at the last moment. However, when the Council met on the afternoon of 13th July, he was able to take his place and to welcome the delegates. Those who remembered him as he was in earlier years were shocked by his appearance: the broad lines of frame and face remained, but strength and energy had gone, leaving a gray shadow wasted by disease. It cost him an effort to speak even for a few minutes.

[1] *Fellowship with Christ and other Discourses*, "Christ and the State:" pp. 192-215.

The next morning, when he was to deliver his address, he was more himself. The day began with a celebration of Holy Communion, at which he presided; in the service itself he took little part, but the hour brought quietness and strength. When he rose in the assembly, though still suffering from breathlessness, especially for the first five or ten minutes, when those who knew his condition feared at every moment that he would collapse, he gradually gained strength; the panting grew less painful, and he was able to speak for three-quarters of an hour. He was master of himself and of his thought. It was the old voice—less resonant, but more impressive; and there was something of the old vigour.

The subject of his address, "The Divine Life in Man," though not of his own choosing, fell in with the trend of his thought. It enabled him to vindicate the principle of Congregationalism, and to strike down deeper still to its broad foundation in the faith held by all Christians in common. To establish such a relation he regarded as essential. Had the distinctive principle of Congregationalism been a truth peculiar to itself, the system in his eyes would have been self-condemned. The justification of its existence was a desire to assert effectively a truth that formed part of the general inheritance.

He started, therefore, from a fact on which all sections of the Christian Church are agreed—[illegible] is capable of receiving a Divine life, and that the purpose of Christ in coming into the world was to enable men to realise its glory and its blessedness. For this Divine life differs immeasurably from that vague presence immanent in all things, whether animate or inanimate, which is affirmed by Pantheism: it is the life that dwells eternally in God's eternal Son. The relations of the Son to the Father determine our relations to Him also: the life that He has made ours has its eternal basis in the Godhead itself. That life was manifested through the Incarnation, and in no arbitrary way. As the eternal power and perfection of the Father are revealed in authority, so in obedience and submission—and these also are divine—are revealed

the grace and the perfection of the Son. To regard the Incarnation, therefore, as an afterthought—as a remedy for sin, and nothing more—is to misconceive its nature; nor is the gift of eternal life in Christ a mere expedient for restoring man to holiness. The Divine idea of man presupposes that man should live his life in the power of the life of the Eternal Son; to that perfection according to the original constitution of our nature we are destined. It is in Christ that we were created: that remains true whether we are conscious of it or not; it remains true in spite of sin and shortcoming. "Through Him" and "unto Him" "all things have been created"; "in Him all things consist";—not the material and visible universe alone, the heavens and the earth, but men as well: they have no independent life; their existence rests on no other foundation. "In Christ is the common root of the life of the race."

This truth, when apprehended, throws new light on the Divine Incarnation; it serves to lessen the mystery of the Divine Atonement.

Man was to find his perfection in sharing the life of the Eternal Son; the Eternal Son was to reveal His own perfection and achieve ours by sharing the life of man. I suppose that the consummate union between man and the Son of God would not have been possible apart from the consummate union effected in the Incarnation between the Son of God and man. Even if we had not sinned, I suppose that He would have come to *us* in order that we might come to *Him*. The fellowship, the partnership between Him and us was to be a fellowship, a partnership on both sides. If the branches share the life of the vine, the vine also shares the life of the branches. He would not let us go when we broke away from Him in revolt against the Divine authority and grace; He clung to us still; and so He came into the inheritance of all the woes that had followed from our sin. The fellowship, the partnership, I repeat, between Him and us was to be a fellowship and partnership on both sides. He had to share our sorrows as we were to share His joy. He had to be assailed by the power of our sin, tempted, hard pressed to maintain His fidelity, as we were to become perfect in the power of His perfection. He had to pass into the awful shadow of the world's sin, to endure the agony of

Gethsemane and the desolation and death of the Cross, as we were to inherit through the golden ages of our immortality the blessed relations to the Father which illustrate the glory of His righteousness. When I have discovered that by the very constitution of my nature I am to achieve perfection in the power of the life of Another—who is yet not another, but the very ground of my own being—it ceases to be incredible to me that Another—who is yet not another—should be the Atonement for my sin, and that His relations to God should determine mine.[1]

God gives us eternal life: He gives it us in His Son. But it lies with us to make that life ours, to realise it by our own will; "it cannot be passed into the soul like a stream of electric force." We can receive it; we can repel and reject it. The potency of life—its germ—may be conferred on us by a Divine act; but if the life is to be more than a potency, more than a germ, we must live it. And although it may be realised in a greater or less degree of perfection, it is manifested in all those who have received it. Its presence or its absence in the soul determines the sharp contrast drawn by Christ and His Apostles between those who are God's children and those who are not, between the forgiven and the unforgiven, the redeemed and the lost. For while in a true and real sense God is the Father of all men—not only of those who love Him and obey Him—it is only those who realise the Divine life who realise their sonship.

Yes! on the Divine side the relationship of Fatherhood stands firm; but on the human side the relationship of sonship and the participation of that Divine life which is inseparable from sonship has to be freely realised by every man. Deny that God is the Father of all men—limit His Fatherhood to those who are already trusting in His infinite mercy, and are already endeavouring to do His will—and you disturb, if you do not destroy, the very grounds of that faith in Him, in the power of which men receive the forgiveness of sin and enter into the actual possession of the blessedness for which they were created in Christ. But, on the other hand, tell men—all men—the covetous, the untruthful, the sensual, the profane, the proud, the

[1] The International Congregational Council, London, 1891. *Authorised Record of Proceedings*, p. 36.

envious, the uncompassionate, the revengeful—that they are already the sons of God, and you reduce Divine sonship to a merely natural relationship; you obscure its real ethical and spiritual character; you contribute to the most fatal illusions; you encourage indifference to the august claims of righteousness; you suppress the most awful warnings of prophets and apostles and of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and you paralyse the urgency of those mighty motives which should induce men to make it the supreme end of life, that the great place and the great inheritance to which God has destined them in Christ may be actually theirs.[1]

The Divine life must be actually lived; it must be a power in conduct and character, or it is not realised. There are some men who live it; there are others who do not. It is on this distinction, ultimate and supreme, acknowledged by all Christians, that the Congregational polity is based. The great question for each one of us is, Have we received the Divine life? Are we living in the power of that life?

It is this which divides those in whom the gracious thoughts of God concerning mankind are being fulfilled, from those in whom they are being defeated; those who have received the forgiveness of sin, from those who are still unforgiven; those who have received the right to become children of God, from those who have not; those who have been translated into the Divine light and the Divine kingdom, from those who are in darkness and in peril of eternal destruction. And if we rightly understand the mind of Christ, it is this which should divide those who are within the Church from those who are without. We may not be able in the confusions and perplexities of human life to secure the perfect realisation of this ideal of the Divine society; but for us on whom the splendours of that ideal have shone, to surrender it would be ignoble and base. We cannot be unfaithful to the heavenly vision.[2]

To plead that such a polity is of the clouds and not of the earth, that it aims at ideals not at possibilities, is worse than futile.

[1] The International Congregational Council, London, 1891. *Authorised Record of Proceedings*, p. 37. [2] *Ibid.* p. 37.

We have been often told that according to Christ's teaching the wheat and the tares are to grow together till the harvest; but He interpreted His own parable—the field in which the wheat and the tares are to grow together is the world; it was not Christ's habit to speak of the world when He means the Church. We have been often told that it is impossible to draw into the membership of the Church all those in whom the life of God is present, and impossible to exclude those from whom it is absent. We admit the impossibility. There was a Judas among the Twelve, and yet according to the ideal of the apostleship, the apostleship was for the friends of Christ, not for traitors. Divine ideals have never yet been realised either in the life of individual saints or of societies. For us, and in this world, the Divine is always the impossible. Give me a law for individual conduct which requires a perfection within my reach, and I am sure that the law does not represent the Divine thought. "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect, but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended of Christ Jesus"—this from the beginning has been the confession of saints. Give me a Church polity which is what men call practical—a polity which in its completeness can be realised—and I am sure that it is something different from the ideal polity of that Divine society whose Builder and Maker is God.

The Church—this is the Congregational ideal—is a society, larger or smaller, consisting of those who have received the Divine life, and who, with whatever inconstancy and whatever failures, are endeavouring to live in the power of it.

All that is characteristic of Congregationalism lies in that ideal. The responsibilities and the corresponding powers attributed to the commonalty of Christian people are directly related to the assumption that they have received the life that dwells in Christ, and that they are one with Him. When they are gathered together in His name, whether they are but two or three or whether they are a thousand, Christ Himself is in the midst of them—one of the company; inspiring their prayers; guiding their decisions; so that their prayers are His and their decisions His rather than theirs. If the ideal were realised, what things soever they bind on earth would be bound in heaven, and what things soever they loose on earth would be loosed in heaven; and whatever they agree to ask would be done for them of the Father. All this would be true if the ideal were realised. It is actually true in the measure in which the ideal is realised.[1]

[1] The International Congregational Council, London, 1891. *Authorised Record of Proceedings*, p. 38.

This life, spiritual in its essence, must find practical manifestation; it must not be confined to aspiration and vision; it must find other outlets, other modes of expression, than worship and prayer. It is to be a leaven in the world. The Christian, therefore, save in rare instances, must not separate himself from his fellows. He must not stand apart from the duties and the activities of men. He must not stunt his intellect or starve his perception of beauty. He is called to take his part in the affairs of society, in the business of the State. How can he slight the call? In the whole order of human life there is a Divine thought to be fulfilled; that Divine thought can be fulfilled only by those who share the Divine life. All Christians are called to be saints; but saintliness has many forms, and there is a saintliness of the street as there is a saintliness of the sanctuary. None of its forms may be neglected. Wherever the flag is not planted, there is the soil of the foe.

We shall not discharge our full duty as ministers or churches unless we make it apparent that, as the great forces of Nature, which are but forms of the eternal power of God, are present and active in every region of the material universe; in phenomena the most splendid and inspiring; in phenomena the most magnificent and obscure—so the Divine life which dwells in man is to be present and active in all the infinite varieties of human effort and experience.

Churches exist, not merely for the consolation and ultimate salvation of their individual members, but that the Divine life which is in them—developed, invigorated, and disciplined by common worship, by ethical as well as spiritual instruction, by the atmosphere and traditions and public opinion of a society which is the home of Christ and of the Spirit of Christ—may change and transfigure the whole order of the world.[1]

Such is the ideal, such the principles of Congregationalism. How far, he asked, does the ideal rule us? How far are we loyal to the law? Have we a deep and vivid consciousness that the Church is the Temple of the

[1] The International Congregational Council, London, 1891. *Authorised Record of Proceedings*, p. 39.

Holy Ghost? To what extent is "the Communion of Saints" being realised in the experience of the churches? How far does the Congregational idea of the Church as a society of men, living in Christ, with direct access in the Son through the power of the Spirit to the Father, knowing for themselves, at first-hand and not by report, the reality and the glory of the Christian redemption,—how far does this idea ensure quietness and confidence in the face of the assault on the historic records of the Christian revelation? These are questions, he urged, that require an answer.

He closed, as he began, with a declaration of unity both between those so gathered and for such ends, and also between themselves and other churches not in communion with them.

The Divine life in man—this is a truth to which, in common with the Holy Catholic Church throughout the world, we bear our testimony; and, as we think, our testimony receives emphasis and strength from the polity of our churches. In that life we who are assembled at this Council are all one. We serve God and His people under different skies; we have been separated from each other, and shall be separated again by the breadths of vast continents and of immense oceans; but in our common union with Christ we are one. In our intellectual account of the contents of the Christian Gospel there may be wide differences; and yet we are one. For us Christ is the Eternal Foundation, and the only Foundation, of the Church, as well as of the individual life. I trust that, through God's grace, the meetings of this Council may assist us to build on that foundation, not wood, hay, stubble, but gold, silver, costly stones. "For each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it . . . and the fire shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire." May God grant that both we and our work may endure the trial of that great day.[1]

With that note of warning—characteristic in its solemn austerity—he closed.

[1] The International Congregational Council, London, 1891. *Authorised Record of Proceedings*, p. 40.

Though still suffering from exhaustion, Dale attended several of the morning and afternoon sessions during the week, but in courtesy to the Vice-Presidents he asked them to occupy the chair. On Thursday evening a meeting was held in the Memorial Hall to consider various social and economic questions. Mr. Tillett—then fresh from the fight at the docks—was among the speakers. There was every chance of a storm, and Dale felt that he must be there. The Hall is approached by a long staircase, and it was with difficulty and not without help that Dale reached the platform, breathless and panting. His friends watched him with alarm throughout the evening. He had prepared himself to speak; but the papers were long, and precluded discussion. On the Saturday, through an imprudent change in dress, he took a chill, and on Monday he was too unwell to attend the Council—too weak even to listen to conversation for more than a few minutes.

On Wednesday he was better; and after some hesitation he decided to carry out his plan of going to Basingstoke, to stay with his brother-in-law, Mr. Alfred Dowling. It was a short journey, and he travelled without inconvenience. The next day he was well enough to go for a drive; and on Friday, sitting in the garden, he began to write his Introduction to the Proceedings of the Council. He had written only a few sentences when there were signs of serious trouble; in the evening he had a second and more alarming attack of faintness, which lasted for some time. Dr. Stokes of Basingstoke was called in, and sat up with him during the night. Sir Andrew Clark came down from London on Saturday afternoon, and found him in a wretchedly weak state, hardly able to speak, and with the heart violently agitated; he did not conceal his anxiety, feeling that recovery, if not hopeless, was improbable. Dale himself was aware of his danger; his experiences are recorded in a diary filled up soon afterwards.

Of course when Sir Andrew Clark was sent for, and —— and —— came, I understood that my position was regarded as critical. I was too weak, however, to be much moved by it—too weak to find much direct consolation in the eternal springs of strength

and joy. God was a kind of *background* to everything—hardly discerned, but there; this was all.

On Sunday afternoon asked —— to read Ephesians i. beginning at the third verse. Three verses proved too much for me, and I had to stop him.

When I became a little stronger, I endeavoured to find rest in remembering that Christ is my brother; but this did not come home to me. I thought of Him as my Lord, and then I had peace.[1]

The sense of Justification has also given me at times great peace. The great words, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us," have given more than peace: at times they have filled me with light.

I have also found great comfort in the account of chastisement in the twelfth chapter of the Hebrews, especially in the declared end of chastisement—"that we may be partakers of His holiness."

Had great peace last night in a vivid sense that redemption began on Christ's side—not mine; that my safety was the fulfilment of His thought.

These extracts—they might easily be multiplied—show how the spirit, vibrating to the shock, shifted and swung till it settled down again to its old bearings; of the physical recovery and its process less need be said. Dale was singularly fortunate in all the conditions of his illness. Dr. Stokes showed exceptional skill and resource;

[1] In the following passage the thought is developed:—"In a time of great prostration and suffering—the very extremity of mortal weakness—when I sorely needed consolation and support, I recalled the great words in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren'; and I endeavoured to draw strength from the great and wonderful truth that Christ, the Eternal Son of God, is our brother, and clings to us with the tenderness and strength of a brother's affection; but that truth gave me no comfort; it seemed remote and unreal. Then I remembered that Christ is my Lord, and it steadied me at once—gave me rest of heart and courage and strength. Under other conditions the truth that He calls us His brethren might bring solace and joy; but if I understand accurately how it was with me at that time, the severity and stress of the suffering and peril demanded something more bracing, something—shall I say—more austere, than the assurance of the brotherly kinship and sympathy of our Lord. It was not sympathy I needed so much as the consciousness of being in the strong hands of One who was my Lord and the Lord of all" (*The Epistle of James*, pp. 276, 277).

The parallel has an interest of its own; but it also illustrates the way in which the experiences recorded in the diary were turned to practical account. This fact lessens, if it does not altogether remove, a natural hesitation to make known these memorials of the inner life.

Mrs. Dowling was indefatigable in her care. The house stood high, on a great chalk slope, sunny and still. If one had to be ill, it would be hard to find a kindlier place. And so—against all hope—Dale began to mend. To Sir Andrew Clark's surprise, within a few days after his visit, Dr. Stokes was able to report that the immediate danger had passed. But recovery was slow. It was with halting step and labouring breath that the invalid crawled back to life. It was a fortnight before he came downstairs, two days more before he was allowed his first pipe—this was the deprivation that had cost him most. Food and drink he could forego without a pang; cut off from tobacco, he was little better than a lost soul. No wonder that the day of restoration was duly recorded in his Journal.

On 18th August he left Basingstoke for Southsea, where he continued to mend. He escaped from the bath-chair and got on his feet again; sleep came back with strength. In fact he was making way steadily when an unfortunate mischance occurred.

Before leaving Basingstoke, he finished his Introduction to the Proceedings of the Council, taking the opportunity of saying several things that he would have preferred to say at the closing session if he had been present. He referred to some incidents of the meetings that seemed to him noteworthy, and among them to a speech of President Northrop of Minneapolis, who had declared the intellect to be the special province of American Congregationalism, and had reproached his English brethren for a disposition to neglect the claims of the mind in matters of religion. These were his words:—

> There are organisations that go down and reach the lower classes and lift them up. God bless them! But that has never been the special province of the Congregational Church, and it is not likely to be in the future. Our province is to take men and women that are capable of thought, capable of intellectual as well as moral and spiritual development, and lift them up to a higher plane as human beings; make them more sensible of God and the things that God has put into this world, so beautiful and so full of His love; lift them up to make them worthy

of His work, and able to do His work, instead of treating them as babes sucking milk, just keeping enough life in them to get them into heaven before they die of inanition, of marasmus—that is Congregationalism, and that is its mission.

The statement was challenged in the Council itself, but Dale gave it prominence and endorsed it, in substance, though he recognised in the passage a "touch of rhetorical exaggeration." He referred to it in the following terms :—

I venture to think that no weightier words than these were spoken at the Council—none that deserve the more serious consideration of English Congregationalists. There is no question about the imperative duty resting upon Congregationalists, as upon all other Christian people, to reach the lowest, the feeblest, the most ignorant, and the most vicious of mankind, and endeavour to draw them to Christ; but while we share this duty with all Christian men, this is not our *special* mission. The vigorous and the cultivated need salvation as well as the ignorant and the wretched. The intellect as well as the heart has to be claimed for Christ, and it is the special duty of Congregationalists so to present the Christian Gospel as to draw to Christ those who are never likely to be reached by the Salvation Army, and to discipline them to the highest intellectual and ethical perfection. The truth is that the Americans have retained the old Congregational tradition. The Congregationalists of the Commonwealth times had many of the qualities of an intellectual aristocracy; and for many generations Congregationalists were accustomed to assert the claims of the intellect in religion far more earnestly than other Evangelical churches. I can remember very well when I was a boy that I somehow caught the habit of thinking of the members of other Christian communities, and especially of members of the Church of England, with a certain measure of intellectual scorn. As I look back upon that boyish conceit I see how ludicrous it was, and I cannot quite understand how I came to entertain it; but I suppose that it was in the air; the intellectual traditions of Congregationalism had at that time not quite died out.[1]

Other portions of the Introduction, especially those dealing with the relation of the Church to social questions, called forth a protest; but it was this passage that provoked the keenest resentment.

[1] International Congregational Council, London, 1891. *Authorised Report of Proceedings:* Introduction, pp. xxix. xxx.

The *British Weekly* in a leading article denounced it with unmeasured vehemence. With a keen eye for a point, the writer caught at the phrase "an intellectual aristocracy"; a phrase applied, not without qualification, and applied to the Congregationalists of a bygone age:—"they had many of the qualities of an intellectual aristocracy." He rang the changes on it. He implied, if he did not assert, that to minister to "an intellectual aristocracy" necessarily involved "the neglect of the ignorant and the poor."

Had he been in fighting trim, Dale would have found it easy to repel the attack; to show that the declaration so impugned was none of his, that his qualifications had been ignored and his words distorted. He had asserted the duty — the "imperative duty" — of *all* Christian churches, Congregationalists included, "to reach the lowest, the feeblest, the most ignorant, and the most vicious of mankind"; to suggest that he advised Congregationalists to turn to the "aristocracy" and to "leave to others the poor of Christ" was to misinterpret his meaning. He would have had something to say also about the tendency of our times to disregard the needs of those who are not outcasts, and to forget that spiritual destitution prevails in the suburb as well as in the slum. He might have abandoned parry for thrust. Some churches that reach the ignorant and the poor, by no fault of their own fail to touch the intelligent and the prosperous; for are there not diversities of ministry as there are diversities of gifts? Deny diversity of service, and any church that does not take all society—rich as well as poor—for its province falls under the same censure; acknowledge it, and how can we doubt that the "special" mission of a church may be to those who worship not only with the heart but also with the mind?

But Dale was wholly unfit for conflict. When the *British Weekly* containing the protest reached him on the Thursday, as soon as he began to read, a violent attack of palpitation came on. He had to send for a doctor immediately. Prompt action staved off a fresh attack; but

the evil effects continued for many days; and so serious a result from so slight a cause warned him that he must avoid all agitation for some time to come. Meanwhile, awaiting the return of his strength, the editors of the *British Weekly* and the *Independent* with most generous consideration shut down the hatches on the controversy.

It had been arranged that Dale should see Sir Andrew Clark again about the middle of September, to be examined by him and receive directions as to his mode of life. He went up to London on 11th September, the interview being fixed for the next day, very nervous and dreading the possibility of an unfavourable report. He records in his diary how his fears were quieted.

12th Sept.—Before going to see Sir Andrew Clark, looked at a text-book I found in this house (Mr. Edward Spicer's), and under date 12th Sept. found the following texts: "*I have seen his ways and will heal him*"; "*I am the Lord that healeth thee.*"

Sir Andrew's report extremely satisfactory. . . . Heart not strong, but perfectly regular, and the murmur gone. Would like me to begin work under restrictions at the beginning of November; but I am to see him first.

So encouraged, he went to Llanbedr, where he spent several weeks, taking Birmingham and Treborth on his way. At Treborth he was able to attend divine service again—for the first time since "Council Sunday"; but two months more passed before he ventured to speak or to pray in public.

24th Nov.—This evening went to "Society,"[1] and for the first time since July took part in a public service: prayed at the close of the meeting. I felt some agitation before rising, but it passed off as soon as I began.

"Society" meeting interesting.—Wilson Roberts gave out hymn—read 1 Cor. xiii.—prayed. He gave out another hymn which was sung to a wild, minor melody. Hugh Evans called up the children, and they said texts before the meeting, on which he made some remarks. Then Evans (a preacher) addressed the meeting; then old John Evans. Then Wilson Roberts went to a poor old woman sitting immediately before him, and asked

[1] A religious meeting at the Welsh chapel.

her about last Sunday morning's sermon, of which she gave an account. Then he passed down the chapel, stopping at the end of each pew to ask each member for an account of "experience" or a text; how many gave the one, how many gave the other, I could not tell. With some he held a conversation, and this was loud enough to be heard generally. (I think that when the voice of the member was very low, he practically repeated what was said.) Then came the admission of a new member by vote; then announcement of a funeral to be held on Saturday; then my prayer.

26th Nov.—Had rather a bad time this morning before I was up, thinking of my first Sunday at Carr's Lane. Prayed God to dissipate my fear and give me courage. In the evening the answer came, and the physical agitation disappeared with the mental dread.

30th Nov.—Read, prayed, and spoke for rather more than thirty minutes, at the Calvinistic Methodist chapel last night. About one hundred and sixty to one hundred and eighty people present. In reading considerably agitated; agitated during first sentence or two of prayer; in speaking was quite free; a slight effort had to be made at starting—then I was quite free. This is my first attempt at speaking since the Council.

CHAPTER XXIV

PREVAILING IN WEAKNESS

The first Sunday at Carr's Lane—Letters to friends—At work again—A letter of consolation—Congregational History—Mr. Barber appointed as assistant—Dr. Allon's death—Renewed illness—The physician's sentence—At Moor Hall—Letters to the church—Political interests—Former days in Birmingham—Books of devotion—Letters from Wales—Mr. Barber's reminiscences.

ON 1st December—his birthday—Dale left Llanbedr to return home; and after a reassuring interview with Sir Andrew Clark, he prepared to preach at Carr's Lane on 6th December. During an enforced silence of more than six months, he had looked forward to the day with eagerness and with apprehension; it had filled his waking thoughts and had entered into his dreams. On 31st October he wrote in his diary:— 1891. Aged 62.

Dreamt last night that I was in Carr's Lane again for the first time. It was the first Sunday in the month. Some one else was preaching; I was to preside at the Lord's Supper. I spoke after the anthem, reminding the people that it was a solemn thing to come back to them from the gates of death; expressing my joy at the signs of the approach of a great religious revival given at the Southport meetings; said how impossible it was to thank them for all their kindness; but that in that place, where even our thanks for God's goodness were so inadequate, this confession of incapacity was less humiliating.

The dream closely foreshadowed the reality. The Rev. R. J. Ward of St. Helen's had been announced to preach; but Dale arranged with him to take his place at the morning service, if not overcome by agitation and

weakness. As he entered the church, the congregation rose and sang the *Te Deum*. After the anthem, he came forward to give expression to his gratitude and joy. He spoke of himself and his work with unwonted unreserve and with a solemn humility.

I return to you from the gates of death. During these months of silence I have seen with humiliation and pain how great have been the defects of my past ministry; and while I thank God for the long-suffering and for the great mercy that He has shown to me in permitting me to stand once more in this place, with the hope that my opportunities for serving Him in the ministry of the gospel of Christ are to be renewed and prolonged, I tremble lest I should again be unfaithful. But the riches of His grace are unsearchable. He was near me in the very extremity of weakness, when I had no strength to appeal to His pity and crave His support; and if it be His will that the joy and glory of the ministry should be mine again, He will not forsake me; He will not restore to me the possibilities of service only to increase my condemnation at the last. . . . We come here to thank God for His compassion and pity and grace, and we cannot thank Him as we would; and this morning I cannot thank you as I would. But I ask you, as my life has been prolonged in answer to your prayers, to entreat God to defend me from sin and from making shipwreck of faith, so that neither you nor I may have reason to regret that when I had come so near to the happy shores, and was just coming into the harbour, I was brought back to the stormy and perilous seas of this present life; entreat Him so to enrich me with His grace that in my personal life I may be more humble, more tender, more gentle, more upright, more unselfish, more devout, and that my ministry amongst you, if God should permit it to continue, may be charged with more of the power of His spirit and of His truth, and may contribute to a far larger extent than in past years to the perfection of those who already know Christ for themselves, to the rescue from sin and from eternal death of those who as yet know Him not.

It was a severe strain. At first his voice broke and faltered, but it soon gathered clearness and strength; and having gone so far without breaking down, he found himself able to preach a short sermon, and also to preside at the Communion service afterwards. The letters that

follow describe his own experience before and during the service, and show in what spirit he resumed his work.

To Mrs. Richard Davies

7th December 1891.

Hearty thanks for your very kind letter. Mrs. Dale has already told you how I got through yesterday. God was very good to me. The dread with which I looked forward to meeting my people for the first time had been largely subdued before I left Llanbedr by some lines in a hymn of Montgomery's which used to be a great favourite of mine.

> His might thy heart shall strengthen
> (which was just what I wanted);
> His love thy joy increase;
> Mercy thy days shall lengthen;
> The Lord will give thee peace.

It was curious what a tonic I found in the first of those four lines.—I was not announced to preach, but made a private arrangement with the minister who was advertised, that if I got through a few sentences of a personal kind without distress he should allow me to go on, announce a text, and preach a short sermon. He was very kind and sat by me prepared, if I was too agitated to rise, to give out a hymn and take the rest of the service. However, it was not necessary, and I preached on "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord,"—an exclamation which I suppose was originally intended as a cry from the heart of the Jewish nation when it had returned from exile and caught sight of its true vocation; but which, as I said, expressed very naturally the emotion with which a Christian minister returned to his work after an experience like mine. The Sunday was set apart for missionary appeal, and the text was an excellent one for that purpose: if a church ceases to declare the works of the Lord, it has no right to live; it should care for life in order to do it.

To the Rev. Dr. Newman Hall

16th December 1891.

Accept my hearty thanks for your kind congratulations. I rejoice and yet tremble, now that I am back again at my work. The hopes and desires of the past months of silence—will they

be fulfilled? The miserable defects which I have seen in my ministry—will they disappear?

You are good enough to say some kind things about my lectures on the Atonement; but it seems to me as if that book and other books which by God's blessing have been of service, never came from me; I seem to have had no part in them except to diminish their power; and there is something distressing at times in what my people are saying about what they owe to me. I know that it is not to me they owe anything; God has blessed them in spite of me. And so I am troubled at beginning work again. I am afraid that it will be as it has been—no better; and I need the prayers of my friends more now that I am better than when I was at the worst.

The exertion did him no harm—in fact it seemed to renew his vigour. During the following week he attended a Council meeting in London of Mansfield College, and on the next day presided over a missionary conference at Carr's Lane. On 13th December he preached again, and on the evening of the 14th he took the chair at a dinner to celebrate the return of the "Liberal Eight" at the recent School Board election. He spoke for half an hour, without effort or fatigue, delighted to find himself once more "among old friends belonging to both sections of the party." The morning after, he was fresh enough for a long talk with Mr. Chamberlain about the political situation and the difficulties of the Liberal Unionist position.

1892. For ten Sundays he was able to preach without a break; then, after a few days' rest, he continued at his post for two months more. At times the heart affection troubled him, especially when agitated or excited; but his power in the pulpit was not sensibly impaired, and some of his sermons—those for instance on the Duke of Clarence, Cardinal Manning, and Mr. Spurgeon, and the discourses on Calvinism and on the Book of Jonah—were such as to involve considerable effort.

The first of the following letters was written to Dr. Paget soon after his appointment as Dean of Christ Church, Oxford; the second to a friend who had lost a child. The letter to Mr. Charles Miall refers to an offer

to complete a history of Congregationalism on which Dale had been engaged for some time.

TO THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF CHRIST CHURCH

19th January 1892.

It was very good of you, with new duties pressing upon your heart and thought, to make time to write to me. Accept my hearty thanks for your letter and also for the copy of Dean Church's *Village Sermons*. They are deeply interesting. I hardly know enough of village life to be able to judge at what points he would be likely to escape from the sight of the average English labourer, but their simplicity is singularly beautiful and impressive.

Your distinguished position brings with it, I suppose, fresh responsibilities. On these I venture to congratulate you; fresh responsibilities mean fresh power for serving God and man. They also mean, in many cases, an almost intolerable sense of weakness; but you have long been taught that this, too, is a gift of grace, and that when it is most painful it is often the promise of the near access of Divine strength—strength which, however, shows no sign of its presence except in the success of our work.

TO THE REV. J. OATES

4th February 1892.

God help you! There is little else to be said; but in saying *that* everything is said. Your letter recalls the anguish of past years. To be in the presence of death oneself is quite another matter. Last July I was too weak to be capable of much mental suffering, and during the time that I knew how near the supreme hour had come I was very quiet. They did not tell me; but when my son came from Cambridge and my daughter from Birmingham, and when I learnt that Sir Andrew Clark had been telegraphed for, of course I knew what it all meant. It did not seem at all terrible. I knew God was with me, as a blind child might know that its mother was in the room; and this gave perfect peace; but I was not strong enough to bear any vivid sense of His presence. When at my request my son read me a verse or two of the first chapter of Ephesians, the wonder of it was too much for me; I was obliged to ask him to stop.

But years ago when death came to me first, and took a child,

the anguish was great: watching her while she lay dying, I learnt for the first time what is meant by the words, "*Like as a father pitieth his children.*" Only so could I be taught the pity of God. And I learnt, too, at the same time what God must feel at the loss of His children. What are all these passionate affections but parables of Divine things? Shall God suffer and not we?

Some years later there came anguish of another kind. My brother's death in 1883 was the beginning of all the physical suffering of later years. Although we had not lived together since we were boys, my house had been his home from the time that our own home was broken up—his home, I mean, when he was away from Cambridge. He had been a kind of son as well as a brother to me. His brilliant success at Cambridge and the power he was gaining there had given me more pleasure than any small achievements of my own. He was my only brother that had lived beyond infancy or early childhood, and I never had a sister. Half my life seemed rent away. I was conscious of the most violent disturbance of the heart. For the first time I learnt what is involved in Christ's having become our Brother. I shrink indeed from what seems to me—it is not so to many others—an irreverent familiarity in addressing Him as Brother: He may call me by that name in His great condescension, but I shrink from calling Him so; and yet the revelation in my sorrow of what brotherhood means remains a wonder and a glory.

God would have done less for you than He has done, if you had not been agonised for the loss of your child; He would have given you less of the image of His fatherhood. For the dear child early death is an unspeakable kindness; she might have achieved more had she lived longer; but as I grow older I think—perhaps it is cowardly—more and more of the perils of living. And what is blessedness to her may be new power to you. Not at once. It is only slowly that great things come to us. I remember very well that when my child died of whom I have spoken, it was many days before I could find any reality in the life to which she had passed. The discovery came curiously. I thought of a friend who had loved her and whom she had loved, who had died a few weeks before, and I said, "She is with Mary Martin." The child was only six, and I could not think of her alone even with God; but when I thought of the saintly woman to whom she had been very dear, her life became very real to me.

"Punishment"? No. You and I may be chastened for our faults—but not punished; and it may not be even chastisement,

but discipline. Think of the child with God. It is a great matter to have been the father—the human author of life—to one who has passed into an eternity of perfection and blessedness. And if in your sorrow there come to you discoveries of definite imperfections and failures, thank God that the child's entry into joy should be made the means of showing you these things, and rely on God's grace to enable you to remember and to amend them.

I have been talking to myself rather than to you. To you I can only say God help you—and He will.

To Mr. C. S. Miall

5th March 1892.

You are very kind, and your proposal might have been very acceptable to me. What you have done for Skeats must have given you an unusual knowledge of recent Nonconformist history. But when I put my own manuscript aside five or six years ago, I had the impression that a single chapter covering facts and aspects of Congregational history lying within my own memory—a chapter which I could have written in ten or twelve hours—was all that was necessary to bring the book to an end. The trouble is that I began it with the intention of making it a Manual—a text-book—for fairly educated young men and women, and the story was told with that view. I found, however, that I had far exceeded the limits within which such a manual should be confined; and I therefore came to the conclusion that it would have to be rewritten. It would have required a great deal of revision in any case; but to make it the kind of book which I now see is the only one that I can write, it must be reconstructed *from* the beginning.

My manuscript is therefore lying locked up for some convenient season! At present, with the very limited hours in the day during which my health allows me to work, other claims take precedence of the history. It is possible that I may never do anything with it. I am obliged to take "short views" of life, and to attempt only such things as I can dismiss within a few days or weeks. My strength is, I think, coming back gradually, but I have sometimes thought that if I am obliged to give up preaching, while I am still fairly vigorous except for the purposes of public work, the history would be a refuge and a solace.

Your doleful account of yourself creates mingled amusement and sympathy. Things are not desperate when a man can describe his miseries so pleasantly.

Those new theories which, as you say, have the transient splendour of meteors, have ceased to dazzle me; and, what is still better, have ceased to trouble me. I find in this some compensation for the fact that they have also ceased to create the genial excitement of hope. I can see no signs that we are on the eve of discovering any great provinces of religious truth that have hitherto been unknown to us, or of correcting and enlarging in any considerable measure our knowledge of provinces which are already the settled home of Christian life and thought. Just now the real work seems to be done in the direction of criticism, and especially criticism of the Old Testament. Whatever comes of it, the old stars will shine in the heavens, and I find no promise that by this process new ones will be discovered.

But to write so long a letter is a very unkindly retur- for your very kindly offer. I thank you for it very heartily.

Several months before his illness began, he had expressed a wish to obtain help in the work of the pastorate, and the officers of the church were willing to carry the plan into effect. But at that time the pressure was not immediate, and action was deferred. Now, the matter became urgent. In the most favourable circumstances—even with the prospect of complete recovery—it was not only desirable but necessary that there should always be some one in reserve in case of sudden emergency, who might take one of the services regularly so long as the pastor's health required, and who could carry on work that ran some risk of being neglected. After much consideration during the early months of the year, the choice fell upon Mr. George Barber, then a student at the Lancashire College; he accepted the invitation, and it was arranged that he should enter upon his ministry on Sunday 1st May. The following letters relate to his appointment.

TO MR. GEORGE BARBER

31st March 1802.

You are already aware that I have been authorised by the church at Carr's Lane to select and appoint an assistant minister on terms which were to be agreed upon by the deacons

and myself. The terms were settled at a deacons' meeting held yesterday evening, and are contained in the enclosed memorandum. I have now the very great pleasure of asking you to accept the appointment.

It is unnecessary after our conversation last Sunday evening to give more than a general outline of the duties of the position. But I may remind you that I shall look to the assistant minister to lighten the pressure upon me of the Sunday services. I do not anticipate that he will have to preach every Sunday; for I hope that in a very short time the necessity of limiting myself to one service a day will have passed by, and that, especially with some assistance in the devotional part of the service, I may often be able to preach both morning and evening. But the assistant will be expected to preach regularly twice or three times in the month, and at times when I may be unable to preach myself. The week-evening service I hope, as a rule, to take myself.

I should look to the assistant to interest himself in the schools and classes and missions, and to endeavour to increase their efficiency. His work will be largely among the younger members of the church and congregation;—indeed when I originally conceived the idea of securing an assistant, I thought of naming him "the minister to the young"; and though I do not propose to give him that title, it fairly indicates what will constitute a large part of his work.

Visitation is a matter of extreme difficulty in a congregation like that of Carr's Lane which is scattered over all parts of a great city and its neighbourhood; but the assistant will be able to do something to supplement my own deficiencies in this department of pastoral duty.

In offering you the appointment, I have very distinctly present to my mind that you are just leaving college, and that you will naturally desire to have a fair amount of time to carry on your private studies. Indeed as I am aware that you have received invitations to the pastorate of more than one church, I should have little hope of your acceptance of this proposal if I did not think it possible that you will regard the position of assistant minister, even in a large church, as more likely to give you the opportunity for private work than the sole pastorate of a much smaller church. I shall not complain, however, if, after you have tried the position for a time, you come to the conclusion that you have completed your preparatory experience and prefer to stand alone.

You will, I think, understand how deeply concerned I am for the continued peace and increasing prosperity of the church of

which I have been for so long a time the pastor, and which has shown me, under a great variety of conditions, unmeasured kindness. That I ask you to share my responsibilities is an assurance, stronger than any words can give, that what I have seen and heard of you has inspired me with confidence in your devotion and fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ and your zeal in His service. It is also a proof of my conviction that you would work as heartily and loyally with me as I believe I should work with you.

I do not wish to hurry your decision, but shall be glad to hear from you without any long delay.

To Mr. George Barber

8th April 1892.

Your letter conveying your acceptance of the invitation to join me at Carr's Lane gave me too much pleasure to allow me to let a single post go out without acknowledging it. But, as I said, I was too much pressed on Tuesday to write at any length. I had proofs in hand, and a visit to pay to one of our people living five miles out of town.

I was delighted by the buoyancy and hopefulness which your letter expressed. Give God thanks for your temperament; it is akin to that courage and confidence which spring from a generous faith in God and in the power of the truth of God; and it allows that faith, which is the root of all ministerial effectiveness, to work unhindered. I trust and pray that growing years will not deprive you of it; or rather, that if the animation of youth and its sanguine disposition are diminished, as they are likely to be diminished, by the sinking of natural fires, the loss will be more than compensated by the increasing robustness of the nobler spiritual powers.

We shall have many opportunities of talking together about our common work, and I will not in this letter anticipate any of the discussions which, I trust, may be helpful to both of us. I have for the present only one thing to say—everything, under God, will depend upon the completeness of our confidence in each other. Our intercourse must be of a confidential character, or there is likely to be trouble. On all matters that may arise —and as soon as they arise—which seem to you to require explanation, I shall rely upon you to be frank with me. Difficulties which are not dealt with when they occur are apt to grow in magnitude very rapidly. Looking back upon my own relations with Mr. James nearly forty years ago, I can see how largely the cordiality and happiness of our relationship with each other

depended on this mutual trustfulness. He knew that he could rely on me—I had the merit of perfect loyalty to him, if no other; and I knew that I could rely on him; and so there was nothing to check the ease and openness of our intercourse.

The relations between the two were from first to last of the closest and happiest kind.[1] Those who saw them together could hardly fail to be struck by the absence of restraint—by the generous confidence on the one side and the loyal affection on the other. In the course of a few months Dale's hopes were more than fulfilled, and in several letters he expresses his delight at Mr. Barber's growing success. One extract will be enough.

TO THE REV. DR. GUINNESS ROGERS

3rd December 1892.

You will be glad to hear that my curate continues to be a great comfort to me. He is very affectionate and frank and modest. Sometimes—often, I hope—he preaches very well; but even a poor sermon of his seems to interest and charm large numbers of people. I am trying to keep him at regular and serious reading, and to assist him to think with more definiteness and accuracy; and he bears it all very admirably. One great thing is that his visits to the people are greatly valued; he is so pleasant: another is that he is creating a very considerable stir among the young people.

It was a happy choice; but the arrangement, as originally conceived, at the very outset had to yield to the stress of circumstances. The intention had been that Mr. Barber should bear only a part—and the lighter part—of the burden of the ministry. But when May came, after the first Sunday he found himself alone. For Dale was prostrate with an attack of his old complaint, and though the danger was less than in the previous year, recovery was slow and precarious. On 11th April, feeling himself over-tired, he had left Birmingham for a short rest at Llanbedr; five days later came a telegram with the news

[1] Mr. Barber's account of his experiences as assistant minister is given at the end of this Chapter, pp. 638-645.

of Dr. Allon's death. The shock was severe. Their friendship reached back through many years to early manhood; it had always been singularly close and tender. Dale was entirely unprepared for such a blow, and at the moment it shattered him. For days he could think of nothing else. To take any part in the funeral service he soon found was beyond his strength, but he returned home to prepare a memorial sermon, already sketched—though in roughest outline—before leaving Llanbedr. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday morning were spent on the task. "I felt on Saturday," he said, "that I had reached the limit of what I could do, but the sermon was done." In the afternoon he travelled to London, to preach at Union Chapel the next day. The sermon was long, and must have taxed his physical endurance. All the associations of the place were such as to stir the deepest emotion. But at the time he was unconscious of any harm, and on the Monday, when he returned to Birmingham, he said that he felt none the worse. Rest and quiet might have averted any evil consequences, but unfortunately the next few days were full of engagements and excitement. At the end of the week Mr. Barber arrived, and on the Sunday he preached for the first time since his appointment. Dale's anxiety for his success was probably greater than his own, and the entry in his note-book shows his relief when the ordeal was successfully over. He was exhausted by evening meetings on the Thursday and the Friday; symptoms of coming trouble appeared, and on the Saturday he was seriously unwell. Fever set in, with great prostration, and during the week that followed he suffered severely both in mind and body.

Slowly strength returned, and at the end of a month he was moved to Moor Hall—the home of his friend Mr. A. R. Dean, about twelve miles from Birmingham—where he remained for three weeks. Towards the end of this visit he learnt for the first time that he was suffering from dilatation of the heart; that the affection was permanent, and had probably existed for some years. He was also warned that even if he returned to work, evening engage-

ments must be abandoned, and that the rule must be only occasionally, if ever, relaxed. This disclosure—though he was not told all the facts as to the nature of the disease—seems to have taken him by surprise. Till then he had confidently anticipated a time when he would be able once more to resume his work with a large measure of his old vigour; now the outlook was suddenly changed. "Can Carr's Lane," he asked himself, with his whole nature in recoil—"can it be carried on upon these terms?" Then the spirit turned back once more to its true pole, and he continues: "I am in God's hands, Who will not require from me work for which I have no strength; but till I return from Llanbedr I shall not yield to this anticipation of the future. Meanwhile, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits!'"

When he found that his wife and his eldest daughter already knew the worst and had faced the possibilities of the future, he too became calmer, and the improvement in his condition soon reported by his physician gave him fresh hope. Before leaving home for Llanbedr, he wrote to Mr. Marris, the Treasurer of Carr's Lane, expressing his own conviction that the prospect was not so hopeless as he had been led to believe.

To Mr. George Marris

24th June 1892.

I find that you have seen Dr. Saundby, and he told me the substance of his conversation with you. I may be too sanguine, but my present impression is that his judgment about the future, which was really formed when I was almost at the worst, is rather pessimistic, and at any rate I am not disposed to regard it as final. I am very much stronger now than he expected I should be, and it is possible that after I have been at Llanbedr I may be stronger than he now supposes I shall be. He concurs in my suggestion that I should see Sir Andrew Clark in the autumn. Whatever may be my condition when I return from Llanbedr, I am anxious that my friends at Carr's Lane should give the first place to the interests of the church; what is best for the church will be best for me.

Once at Llanbedr, the repose of the place and the quiet, enlivened by the occasional visits of friends, helped to restore his strength. At times he still suffered, especially after any special effort. But at the beginning of September he was able to spend ten days at Treborth before going to London to see Sir Andrew Clark, who gave a more encouraging report than at his previous visit, nine months before, though the condition of the heart was still far from satisfactory. The letters written during the later part of the summer bear out this impression. Whether addressed to his church or to his personal friends, they do not read as though he felt that his active work was practically closed.

To the Church at Carr's Lane

Moor Hall, Sutton Coldfield,
26th June 1892.

It is a great trouble to me that I should have been once more, and so soon after the illness of last summer and autumn, withdrawn from my work; and I cannot free myself from anxiety about the effect of it on the interests of Carr's Lane. Happily, Mr. Barber's settlement, and the great cordiality with which you have received him, and the satisfaction with which I know his work is regarded, have to some extent relieved my mind; but I long to find myself in Carr's Lane pulpit again.

I am now entering the fortieth year—not of my pastorate—but of my ministry among you. It was at a church meeting held towards the end of June, or at the beginning of July, 1853, that I was invited to become the assistant of Mr. James; and the fortieth year will therefore be completed next summer. It is a long time to have been the minister of the same congregation. I am humbled as I look back upon my work. I sometimes wish that I could have begun it with the same thoughts about its greatness and solemnity with which I now regard it. God has been very merciful to me, bearing with what I now see to have been the grave defects of my ministry. You and your fathers have also borne with me; their kindness and yours have been wonderful. It seems to me sometimes that I am only just beginning to catch a faint glimpse of the glory and power of the redemption which God has wrought for us through the Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. If, through

God's grace, I am allowed to preach to you for a few years longer, I pray that I may be able to serve you—if not with greater energy, for this I cannot hope for, yet with a clearer knowledge of the gospel of Christ and a deeper concern for your salvation than in the years which have gone by.

LLANBEDR, 30*th July* 1892.

There are times when I become rather impatient under this long continuance of enforced inactivity. I have been greatly cheered by assurances which have recently reached me again and again of the blessing which God has caused to rest on my ministry in past years, and of the light and strength which, through God's grace, some are finding in my books; but I seem to have a great deal to say that I have never said yet, and I want to say it. How wonderful the gospel of Christ is! I have been thinking about it and preaching about it for more than forty years, and yet there seem to be vast provinces of truth in it which I am only just beginning to explore.

I have often told you that we owe a great deal to the quiet months that Paul spent in prison; it was during this enforced interruption of his activity that he came to know, through the illumination of the Holy Ghost, all the wonders contained in his later epistles. Physical weakness compelling abstinence from work and separating us from the common excitements of life, may render us all a similar service. And perhaps, as my life has been for the most part so free from serious illness, and has been so full of varied interests, I have learnt far less than most Christian men about those aspects of divine truth and grace which have been in all ages the consolation and support of the weak and suffering. If I am learning them late, I trust that it will not be too late for me to speak of them effectively for the consolation and support of others. I trust that you are holding together and holding fast to Christ, and that when I return we may have a time of great spiritual revival. Pray for this and expect it.

TO MRS. RICHARD DAVIES

LLANBEDR, 2*nd July* 1892.

We are very concerned to hear of your illness. To have spent three weeks in bed after your pleasant excursions in Devonshire is a disappointing way of completing your holiday. However, that you have begun to sit up even for an hour in the day is the assurance that you are recovering strength. It is not quite easy

for me to think of you except as in vigorous health, buoyant, and active; the slowly moving hours of convalescence do not seem to fit at all naturally into your life. I wonder how you endure being cared for instead of caring for others. And yet this change of experience is good for us: I, at least, think that I have found that the sense of being dependent on others—wholly dependent—obviously dependent—is favourable to the breaking down of that self-assertion which is the destruction of faith.

My late illness was not, as far as I know, as serious as the illness of last year; and yet the Birmingham physician who was called in seems to have come to very gloomy conclusions about me. He professed himself, however, to be very much astonished by the extent to which I had recovered before I left home. . . . [We] spent rather more than a fortnight with one of my people who has just taken a house near Sutton Coldfield, eight miles from Birmingham. The house is a curious one: part of it dates back to Queen Mary's time; the modern part, containing the principal rooms, was built, I suppose, about fifty or sixty years ago. Bishop Vesey is said to have built the original Hall; and a room wainscotted with oak from floor to ceiling bears his name. In this room is the favourite haunt of the ghost attached to the house; whether it is the ghost of the old Papist bishop I do not know; if it is, his sorrows must have been embittered by seeing a heretic like me enjoying his house. The place came into the hands of Hackett, who was made Bishop of Lichfield at the Restoration, and whose painted effigy appears above his tomb in the cathedral. It still belongs to Hackett's descendants, and a library of books—some curious, several very handsome—is let with the house. The books, however, as far as I discovered, did not any of them belong to the Bishop; they were accumulated for the most part during the years between 1720 and 1830.

What a long story about what is, after all, not a very noticeable house. We found the neighbourhood very interesting. Drayton Manor—Sir Robert Peel's—is within an easy drive, and there are other interesting places, some of which, although they are so near to Birmingham, I had never seen or even heard of; which ignorance is a condemnation of my manner of life during the last thirty or forty years. Here are lovely places within reach which God and man have made beautiful, and I have been grinding so hard that I have never looked at them: *peccavi.*

We who are here are greatly enjoying Llanbedr. Mrs. Dale is much absorbed in our "garden and grounds." The garden reminds me of Noah's Ark. Mrs. Dale was resolved that it should be full of flowers this summer, and I suppose that there

are ten thousand varieties blending in a certain confused splendour: as many sorts of flowers as Noah had of clean beasts, and as many sorts of weeds as he had of the unclean. Mrs. Dale professed to spend a great part of yesterday weeding, but I think that her heaviest work was in pulling up the superfluous flowers. Poor creatures! they looked so wan and pale and weary; they had been living in a crowd so long, and had had so little to live upon, that they were as worn out as the zealous politicians will be after the election. It seems odd, by the way, for me to be living this quiet life while a general election is going on.

Though out of the fight he had not lost his interest in politics, and he watched with an eager eye the fortunes of his personal friends in the constituencies. The following letter was addressed to a member newly elected for the first time.

To ———

LLANBEDR, *8th July* 1892.

My politics are mastered by my affection, and I rejoice heartily in your return. It was kind of you to send the telegram; if it had not come I should have been on the worry till the Liverpool papers came in in the afternoon.

But what an experience you are likely to have in your first Parliament! Whichever party is in power there will surely be confusion and trouble. Perhaps that may be better for a man beginning Parliamentary life than a time of clear and unbroken victory for his own side, with a great succession of measures which he has long cared for placed on the Statute Book; and better, too, than a time of utter prostration. Even if the counties rally to Mr. Gladstone and give him an effective majority, he will have to fight hard; and, quite apart from the Irish difficulty, I am doubtful whether there are large measures of reform on which there is a clear and reasoned conviction on the part of any great and decisive number of politicians. On the other hand, if the present people remain in office it will be with a diminished majority, and they will have to meet a party rendered less amiable than usual by defeat. I congratulate but do not envy you.

You will not think that it indicates any distrust of you if I say that you will not do amiss if you think over the men whose moral fibre deteriorated as the result of entering the House, and if you ask how the deterioration came about. Your own habits

of life are, I think, of a kind to relieve those who love you from all anxiety on this point; and yet, strong men have sometimes proved weak. Be sure of it, the conditions of life which you will now have to meet will make it immeasurably harder than ever before to live the life that your own heart desires to live.

TO THE VERY REV. DR. BOYLE[1]

LLANBEDR, *12th July* 1892.

It was very pleasant to receive your kind letter. Like many other men who are over sixty I am disposed to think that the former days were better than these. Birmingham is still a remarkable place, and I share your delight at the victory of last week[2]; but it seems to me that the interesting people have gone. It may be that among the younger men whom I am not in the way of seeing there are some who are as able and attractive as were some of those who founded the Graduates' Club so many years ago; but I have my doubts. And outside the club, or rarely attending, there was Dawson; and among those who were certainly outside, Vince and John Henry Chamberlain and Harris, and Joseph Chamberlain in his fresh and brilliant promise. Dawson, Vince, and John Henry Chamberlain are dead. Harris remains and is as kindly and epigrammatic as ever; but in the break-up of the Liberal party he remained with Mr. Gladstone, and I seldom see him. Joseph Chamberlain is, of course, still immensely interesting; but I am not sure that he is quite as interesting as he was twenty years ago, and he is necessarily very much away from Birmingham. The time was when I used to have a smoke with him and John Henry Chamberlain and Timmins and the rest, as often as twice or three times a week. Timmins, by the way, still remains; and—how it would have confounded the old Governors!—was Bailiff of King Edward's School last year. Of all the men of that time Bunce has been for many years more than any of the rest to me. Among my own ministerial brethren I have no intimate friend; and I see nothing of your men. Wilkinson, of course, is kindly—very kindly indeed; but that is all. The split of the Liberal party has made an immense difference to my private life. There are two clubs, and I belong to neither. I have friends on both sides, but the discussions that we had at the old Arts Club before the quarrel I look back upon with lasting regret. In those days the Liberal party in Birmingham was in many respects like a secular

[1] Dean of Salisbury, see p. 206.
[2] The Unionist victory at the General Election.

Church. What a garrulous person I am becoming! Your letter set me off.

Thanks for Church's sermon. It has many great qualities and ought to be useful. I have a growing admiration for him. Do you not think that his ethical treatment of Bacon is wonderful? I read it here during a holiday a year or two ago, and it seemed to me one of the most searching things I had seen for a long time.

TO THE REV. GEORGE BARBER

LLANBEDR, *19th July* 1892.

It is a great pleasure to me to be able to infer from your letter that you are mending; but I am rather anxious about your holiday. Although the long railway journey—if you take it without a break—seems to me rather undesirable, the almost irresistible temptations in Switzerland to take long and exhausting walks are still more dangerous. If you are proposing to settle down at some place 2000 or 3000 feet above the sea and loaf about, you will do well; especially if you are at an hotel or pension with a fair number of visitors. But I should be greatly concerned if you attempted to walk much. I speak feelingly. My constant temptation here is to tramp farther than I ought, and though I suffer from it I sin again. With my remembrance of the glory within reach from most of the places where you would be likely to stay in Switzerland, I have the impression that you would be always sinning. Ah! what times—never to return—the very thought of Switzerland recalls.

I have ordered a book from Cornish's for you. It is a Manual of Intercessory Prayer compiled by Father Benson of the Cowley Fathers. A copy was sent to me many years ago by a High Church lady with whom I had some very pleasant times on the Nile. It is a small book, and you can take it with you to Scotland or Switzerland or anywhere else for use during your holiday. What kind of use you make of it you will determine for yourself. I have found it helpful for devotional purposes in solitary prayer—very helpful. But it may also be of use in suggesting topics for prayer in public, a matter in which I think—nay, I am sure—that I was wretchedly at fault when I was young, and am not much better now that I am getting old. These High Churchmen, with the use they make of the liturgical and devotional literature of many centuries, have much to teach us. Of course you will find some things in the book which you will not approve; but I shall be surprised if you do not find it very helpful.

TO THE REV. GEORGE BARBER

LLANBEDR, *14th August* 1892.

It was a great pleasure to me to receive your letter and to know that you are gaining strength. Your delight in the beauty and glory of mountains and forests and rivers recalled the happiness of distant years when I, too, was young, and saw the great wonders for the first time. I was never in the Austrian Tyrol; but unless I am at fault in my geography, you are not very far from the head of the Lago di Guarda, where I spent two or three delightful days and nights about ten years ago. The atmospheric conditions must, I think, have been exceptionally favourable; for I never saw greater beauty in the Italian lakes.

Ask Dr. Scott whether he has seen Bertrand's exposition and criticism of Ritschl. I have been reading it with great interest. It has the lucidity characteristic of most French books, and contains a large mass of excellent thought. Forsyth of Leicester, who is here, lent it to me. It has strengthened my desire to have five or ten years more to preach on the great commonplaces of the Christian gospel. Forsyth said a good thing the other day—he thought that "the time had come to get back the word *Grace* into our preaching"; word and thing have too much disappeared.

TO THE REV. GEORGE BARBER

LLANBEDR, *31st August* 1892.

We had Mr. Forsyth here for three weeks. He is a very cultivated man, and has a much keener interest in theology than is common in these days,—I mean in Systematic Theology. While here, he was writing an essay on Revelation for a volume which has been projected by some of the younger men—Adeney, Horton, Bennett, and one or two more. Another visitor we had —but only for a day—was Arnold Thomas of Bristol, who impressed me as he always does with the wonderful beauty of his spirit. His gentleness, modesty, and devoutness are wonderful; he owes much, no doubt, to nature and to the charm of his early home life, but more to grace. Such men make one sigh. If through the power of the truth and Spirit of God they have achieved such sanctity, why might we not all achieve it?

To the Rev. G. G. Findlay

Llanbedr, *8th August* 1892.

Thank you very much for the copy of your *Ephesians* which has just reached me. I shall read it with great interest. I hope that you had as much delight in working at the Epistle as I had. Some parts of it intoxicated me; whether I was in the body or out of the body, I could hardly tell; but when it came to writing what one had seen, the colours had faded and the glory was extinguished.

I trust that you are keeping well and strong. What a mystery it is that one's work should be arrested by some petty failure in the strength of a muscle. That there should be a complete break-up and the earthly life finally closed—this seems all right; but to live and yet be maimed for some at least of the highest purposes of life by a mere physical defect—this seems amazing.

To Mrs. Richard Davies

14th September 1892.

You will be interested to hear that I had a very pleasant time with Sir Andrew Clark, partly medical, partly theological. He gave me an excellent account of myself: the only drawback was that the contractile power of the heart did not prove to be as great when he examined it by auscultation as the general symptoms indicated; but he assured me that I was definitely better than when he examined me immediately before I came back to work at the end of last year. With the severe strain on the system which came from my illness in May this seems to me very satisfactory. I certainly grew stronger week by week during the early months of this year, and I trust that a similar advance will take place during the remaining months of this year; and then I shall begin to consider whether I may not take a field service at a *Sassiwn*[1] next autumn.

How kind you were to us! It was like being in a moral

[1] *Sassiwn* = "association," but especially the Quarterly Meetings of the ministers and deacons of the Calvinistic Methodist Churches in Wales. The meetings as a rule last for three days, two being given to business, and the third to preaching. On the third day, which is a great religious festival, three assemblies are held—in the open air when the season permits—and two sermons are preached at each.

Riviera—all warmth and sunshine. God bless you and Mr. Davies and your young people for all your goodness. None of you know how much you did for me. In a day or two after we came to you it seemed to me that I had made a movement which might have extended over weeks.

From the few of my people whom I have seen I have had the most affectionate welcome. It is quite wonderful how loyal and good they are. One of them was walking up and down the Bristol Road on the chance of seeing us pass up in the cab.

The trouble is that the impressions of God's transcendent grace which have come to me at times during the last few months are not to be translated into words. I feel like a dumb man wanting to speak and knowing that I cannot. If God would but touch my lips!

REMINISCENCES OF DR. DALE

BY THE REV. GEORGE BARBER

The Rev. G. Barber.

I first met Dr. Dale in the old vestry at Carr's Lane; it was in 1892. He was at that time on the look-out for an assistant, and I had accepted an invitation to preach "with a view." From what I had heard I thought that I was going to be introduced to a very austere man, and one of whom every student was expected to be afraid. As my host, however, who happened to be the Secretary of the church, knocked at the vestry door, a hearty, cheery voice called "Come in," and there I stood face to face with him whom afterwards I learned to love with the love of a child for its parent. His first words were, "Good morning—glad to see you—please take a seat"; so warm was the welcome Dr. Dale gave me that all the fears that had made my heart tremble passed away and I felt perfectly at home.

I preached in the evening and did not think that I was at all nervous, but Dr. Dale who was present said that I stormed away, first to the right of me, and then to the left of me, and then in front of me; and so it was settled by the family that I must have been a little nervous. It

was not until I preached a second time and had some talk with Dr. Dale in his study—that was where I found afterwards he always talked best—that I really felt how much I should like to become his assistant. I shall never forget the first real talk I had with him. He told me all about his younger days — the early years of his ministry, his associations with Mr. James, and how he loved and trusted him. He spoke of the confidence Mr. James had in him, and he in Mr. James; and expressed the hope that he might find some young man who would be to him what he had been to Mr. James. It was then that I felt how much I should like to be that young man, but I did not say so. It is impossible for me to say how much Dr. Dale had impressed me in that hour or two's talk. He was by far the greatest man I had ever met. We stood up to go—for a knock had come at the door, telling us it was time to go to bed; then it was that Dr. Dale said, "Before we say good-night I want to tell you that I should like you to come and be my assistant." "But what about the church?" I said; "do you think the people wish it?" "Yes," he said; "I have made inquiries and I am perfectly certain they are with me. Do not, however, say anything now; you must think about it; now let us kneel down and pray." When we rose from our knees tears were in his eyes, and I felt I had seen the face of God. The Rev. G. Barber.

I accepted the call which was sent a few days later, and began my ministry on the first Sunday in May 1892. I remained as Dr. Dale's assistant until March of 1895.

At the outset Dr. Dale was looking forward with great hopefulness to the work "we should be able, under God, to do together"; for his health, which for some time past had been uncertain, seemed to be surer and the tide was still flowing. However it only seemed; for almost immediately after I went to Birmingham, he had a most serious break-down, and was compelled to go into Wales and stay for more than two months. This was a great blow to me, and had it not been for the kind and affectionate letters, so strong with the assurance that God in

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answer to so many prayers would sustain me, I should have altogether lost heart.

It was a great day both for me and for Carr's Lane when he returned. What eager, joyful faces those were crowding the old chapel to welcome him; but no heart was more glad than mine. I felt, as I opened the door for him that led from the vestry into the chapel, the proudest man on earth. That was the morning when he preached on the "Grace of God," and pleaded for the recovery of that lost word "Grace." It was a wonderful sermon, and in the vestry afterwards I told him it was unfair for him to come from Llanbedr and preach such a sermon as that, for it gave me no chance; he only laughed. This reminds me of another amusing incident about the same time. He was wearing a new silk hat, and I told him I thought I should get one, as mine was rather shabby; but he charged me very seriously not to buy one just yet, for if I did the people would never know that he had bought a new one.

It is not possible for me to go over my associations with Dr. Dale, marking the sequence of events, although I could easily do it; for I have lived through that, alas! too short but happy history so often that almost everything that happened is fixed for ever in my mind. But the space allowed me makes it impossible. My love for my old chief—as he used to call himself—and, as far as it lay in my power, my devotion to him I cannot put into words.

I remember Dr. Fairbairn telling me how much he was impressed when for the first time he read Dr. Dale's *Discourses on Special Occasions*, which, I believe, he said was his first acquaintance with any work Dr. Dale had done, and how on a subsequent visit to Birmingham he sought out Carr's Lane and walked to and fro in front of the chapel and looked up at it and thought, "It is here that so great a preacher proclaims the everlasting Gospel." But afterwards when he came to know Dr. Dale, he found the man greater than his sermons. Indeed it was so. What he once said in those study talks of his respecting

John Bright was equally true of himself. "When," said he, "you listened to Bright you always felt more impressed with the force he kept in reserve than with what he actually used." It was this sense of invisible strength and greatness that laid hold of men who came near to Dr. Dale and made them proud to call him their friend. The Rev. G. Barber.

What privilege and happiness were mine. Almost every day for three years I saw him and talked with him. On Monday mornings I used to call to see if he were well after the Sunday's preaching; for preaching when I knew him used to take a great deal out of him. If he were well he would suggest that we knelt down together to ask God to be good to both of us, and grant His blessing to follow our labours on the day before. How earnestly he used to pray that God would "save the unsaved." It was in these Monday morning prayers that he made me feel almost oppressed with the burden of preaching to save sinners. Once when talking of Mr. Charles Vince and the kind of preacher he was, he said that Mr. Vince had told him that his own work was to get men converted and then send them on to Carr's Lane to finish. But no one could have listened to such prayers as I heard and not have felt that to save men was the height of all Dr. Dale's thought and work. A member of the congregation at the close of a sermon that lasted for an hour, and had been preached amid a stillness most painful, nothing heard but the tones of the preacher, and during the pauses the ticking of the clock—a sermon on the sad and awful issues of a sinful life, and the glory and the joy of a life lived in Christ—said if Dr. Dale intends to preach like that I shall not come and hear him, for I cannot stand it; it goes through me. I spoke to Dr. Dale afterwards about the stillness and said it was simply awful. "Ah! yes," he said; "but it was more awful to me; it is hard to preach like that, but it must be done."

About six months after I had become his assistant he gave me his *Fellowship with Christ*, saying that he would like me to see what he preached about. We had been

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speaking of various kinds of preaching, and I had suggested a certain text as a good one for a sermon. He was not a little amused, and replied: "Yes, it would make a good 'fancy sermon,' but 'fancy sermons' are useless things. No doubt they attract the people and please them; they are a sort of religious brandy and water sermons; and the people find a certain delight in taking them in, but they are not wholesome enough to do any lasting good." From that time to this I have had a horror of "fancy sermons."

It was at this time that Dr. Dale put Dean Church's and Dr. Francis Paget's sermons into my hands, saying, "Read them—read them over and over again, and you will see the kind of sermons I like." He also often read Newman's sermons and recommended them to me.

How he hated "flashy" preaching! Once I told him of a striking and brilliant sermon I had heard from a popular preacher; he listened as I described it, and then said with considerable warmth: "Yes, I used to preach like that when I was a young man; but now, thank God, I have more sense."

The Living Christ and the Four Gospels next to *The Atonement* was, he believed, one of the most helpful things he had ever written. Dr. Amory Bradford of New Jersey told me that Dr. Dale had done through that book more for the people of America in making them realise that Christ was really alive than any other preacher or book he knew.

How he came to write *The Living Christ*—so he said—was in this way. He was writing an Easter sermon, and when half-way through, the thought of the risen Lord broke in upon him as it had never done before. "Christ is alive," I said to myself; "alive! and then I paused;—alive! and then I paused again; alive! Can that really be true? living as really as I myself am? I got up and walked about repeating 'Christ is living!' 'Christ is living! At first it seemed strange and hardly true, but at last it came upon me as a burst of sudden glory;

yes, Christ is living. It was to me a new discovery. The Rev. G. Barber.
I thought that all along I had believed it; but not until that moment did I feel sure about it. I then said, 'My people shall know it; I shall preach about it again and again until they believe it as I do now.'" For months afterwards, and in every sermon, the Living Christ was his one great theme; and there and then began the custom of singing in Carr's Lane on every Sunday morning an Easter hymn. When first I attended service there I was surprised to hear on a November morning the hymn given out "Christ is risen: Hallelujah!" I mentioned it to Dr. Dale afterwards and he said: "I want my people to get hold of the glorious fact that Christ is alive, and to rejoice over it; and Sunday, you know, is the day on which Christ left the dead."

Many of these study talks to which I have referred and from which I received so much help, were upon the great truths of the Christian gospel. How patient and attentive he was whenever I told him of the difficulties that perplexed me! Often I found he had anticipated them, and when I could hardly express them myself, he expressed them for me. He had a wonderful way of leading men out of a fog and showing them the blue heavens again and the sunlight. This he did for me over and over again. Never once did I leave him without feeling that I had a new gospel to preach. He seemed to be able to lift the curtain on every side of him and show you glimpses of an unseen, invisible world. What he said once of Bishop Westcott was equally true of himself—he had "repose among eternal things."[1] I remember going to him on one occasion in great distress; I wanted to preach on "Christ died for our sins," and I thought that if I could only show how through the death of Christ it was made possible for God to forgive sin, many whom I knew might be led to believe. He replied: "Give up troubling, my friend, about *how* it was possible for God to forgive sin, and go straight and tell the people that God *does* forgive sin, and tell them straight that Christ died for

[1] "Repose and hope amid eternal things."—WORDSWORTH.

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their sins. It is the fact the people want most to know, and not your theory, nor mine, as to how it was or is possible." I saw it at once, and went to my work with a lighter heart.

I cannot omit to mention all the help his prayers were to me; those in the sanctuary were the noblest and the tenderest I have ever heard or read. One of the old members, a poor old woman of sixty-five, used to say, "Ah me! I cannot understand his sermons, but his prayers do me so much good that I always come."[1]

It was, however, at family prayers that I felt most the power he seemed to have with God. Night after night have I made an excuse to call, so that I might stay for family worship; it was as though one were in the presence of the "burning bush," and oftentimes as we rose from our knees we saw a new light shining in each other's face.

To tell all that Dr. Dale was to me would be to express all that Timothy felt Paul was to him. To say that I loved him with a great and tender love, and that I was prepared to do any and every service he asked of me or could ask, will perhaps show how much I felt I owed to him, and as time goes on I feel the debt to be increasing. To know that my love was reciprocated was a great joy to me; no father could have been kinder to his own child, no teacher more patient with his scholar, and no friend more loyal to his friend. Towards the close of his life, indeed not many weeks before his death, when I called to say good-bye to him, he said: "Good-bye; you must often write to me, and often come to see me, for I have learned to love you far more than ever I thought was possible; preach still the same gospel you have preached here, and all will be well." I left Birmingham with a light and happy heart. Never once during the three years I

[1] Some regret has been expressed that the prayers were not reported, but Dale set his face against any attempt to do so. On one such occasion he wrote: "Pray do not dream of reporting my prayers: *they are for God* Who, I trust, interprets and answers them."—ED.

was his assistant had there been a single unkind word spoken on his part, nor a reluctance on mine to do all that I could to save him or make his work lighter. They were happy, peaceful years, and to-day are to me as fresh and as inspiring as ever. The Rev. G. Barber.

CHAPTER XXV

"REPOSE AND HOPE AMID ETERNAL THINGS'

Withdraws from public life—Free Church Councils: his attitude towards them — Speech at the preliminary conference — Stands apart — The "Borderland" and hypnotism—Divine sonship and Divine Fatherhood —Religious life in Birmingham—Theology and politics—The discipline of suffering—The Church Congress at Birmingham; writes the address of welcome—The ministry a vocation—A letter on religious difficulties—Mr. Stead's book—Stanley and Pusey.

IN the third week of September 1892 Dale returned to work and preached for the first time, with every outward sign of renewed health. He was able to conduct the whole service without assistance. Once—and only once—his voice failed him for a moment; but after nearly five months' silence that was not unnatural. His tone and temper were buoyant and hopeful. He had learnt, however, that he must go gently if he was to go safely, and during the autumn and winter he kept himself free from all exhausting engagements. The result of this precaution was most satisfactory. He took a Sunday's rest in November and a week in January; but with these two exceptions he
Aged 63. preached continuously until the end of February, when he went away to Llanbedr for a fortnight. In addition to his regular work, he wrote his "Memoir of Henry Rogers," prefixed to the new edition of *The Superhuman Origin of the Bible*, reviving early memories with great enjoyment. He also began to meditate a series of lectures or sermons on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

From public work of all kinds he had almost wholly withdrawn. He continued to act on the Governing Body

of the Grammar School and as Chairman of the Mansfield College Council. But this was all that he attempted. He attended very few public meetings, and none held at night. In fact, after this second illness, he determined to give up all political and ecclesiastical controversy, except under circumstances that absolutely compelled him to express an opinion. But in one case he felt bound to speak—even with the certainty that he would speak in vain, and though shrinking from the effort that speech involved.

At this time the movement towards organised co-operation among the Nonconformist churches was making rapid progress. Free Church Councils, as they were called, had been established in many parts of the country. It was proposed to form such a council in Birmingham. From the outset Dale had regarded the movement with grave distrust; and notwithstanding his personal regard for some of its leaders, especially for Dr. Mackennal and Dr. Berry, he would have no part in it. But he did not seek occasion to publish his hostility. Until the friends of the movement began to stir in Birmingham, forcing the churches and their ministers to decide whether they would help or hold aloof, he was silent. Then, knowing that his silence would be misinterpreted, he found himself compelled to make his position clear, and at a preliminary conference of ministers and delegates he stated his objections to the policy which was pressed upon them.[1]

To any organisation tending to promote union for strictly religious objects he was ready to give a hearty support. One of the propositions before the conference was that a house-to-house visitation should be arranged throughout the town, in which all Evangelical Nonconformists should combine. Such a scheme commanded his strongest sympathy; indeed it was one of his own unfulfilled purposes. When it was carried into effect, he urged the members of his church to take their share in the work. But the formation of a council, such as was now in men's minds, seemed to him to involve considerations of a wholly different order. Its object—as stated by

[1] See also pp. 394-397.

the Rev. F. L. Wiseman, the most active exponent of the scheme—was to enable Evangelical Nonconformists to take concerted action on questions affecting their common interests, or bearing on the social, moral, and religious welfare of the people; among the instances that he gave were intemperance, gambling, sweating, overcrowding, vice, the opium monopoly, arbitration, and the moral character of public men. The resolution before the conference did not go beyond discussion, but Mr. Wiseman in his speech contemplated united action also. At this point, Dale felt that they had come to the parting of the ways in the choice of methods by which the Christian Church should attempt to regenerate the social life of nations. For himself he was convinced that the Church was in its very essence a religious institution established for religious ends; that social and political reforms, however desirable, were not the objects of its activity; and that so to regard them would be to degrade the Church into a political organisation. The dominion of the State over the Church he regarded as perilous to religion; the dominion of the Church over the State as perilous to both. He pleaded for delay, for deliberation, before they committed themselves finally to this policy.

The following extracts from his speech to the conference will indicate his line of argument.

There have been two methods in which the Christian Church has exerted its power over the ethical life of the kingdoms in which it has existed, and over the political action of those kingdoms. For three centuries it was content to address itself immediately to the great work of drawing those within its reach to the acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord and Redeemer of men. It disciplined their character; it breathed into them a new spirit; they reached higher and nobler ethical principles, and large changes were wrought upon society as the result of that work. Then came a time when the Church was impatient of the slow progress which it made by that method; and if we descend a few centuries later we shall find the great Church of Western Christendom directly interfering as a church in the social and political affairs of nations. In the hands of the great Popes, and in the circumstances under which that inter-

ference was made, I am not prepared to dispute the value of what was done for the civilisation of Europe by the Papal power. . . .

But we have come to the conclusion that the interference of organised churches with organised political societies has proved after all a false method of effecting the great objects of the Christian gospel. . . . I have always felt that the line to be taken is this: that the churches should do all they can in the power of the grace and truth of Christ to renew and sanctify all whom they reach; and that then Christian men—as citizens, not as members of churches—should appear in the community to discharge their duties to it, under the control of the spirit and law of Christ. The Papacy dealt with imperial power. There seems now to have come a great chance to the Free Churches of the country to deal with democratic power. . . .

You will not be able to stop with pronouncing an opinion on questions that are practically before Town Councils and Parliament. I believe that you will be bound to interfere in local elections, both municipal and parliamentary, if you carry out the principles which led to the formation of such a council as is now proposed. I believe that we shall not hasten the triumph of the principles for which we care—shall not hasten the securing of the ends on which our hearts are set—by any such organised interference of churches with municipal and political life. I do not want to see a Nonconformist party in Birmingham touching municipal elections. I do not want to see a Nonconformist party in Birmingham touching political elections. . . .

I look back upon the history of this town. Some twenty years ago, I remember, there was a great and successful movement for reforming our administration and ennobling it. The men that took part in that movement had learnt the principles on which they acted, and caught the spirit by which they were inspired, very largely in the Nonconformist churches of Birmingham. . . . I do not believe that if the Nonconformist churches of Birmingham had been organised to secure the results which were achieved by that municipal reform, their organised efforts would have been half as effective as the efforts of their individual members as citizens in the community.

In private letters he stated his objections still more forcibly.

I have the gravest fears of what will come from the present passion of some excellent persons to capture Christian churches and to change them into political and municipal caucuses. It

will compel a serious reconsideration of the true idea of the Church. I have no objection to political caucuses; they are necessary; but God forbid that any church of which I may ever be minister or member should be a caucus.

Mr. —— and his friends . . . do not seem to believe in leaven; they want law, and want it swiftly. Nor do they believe in the power of the spirit; they want the letter. They would have had Paul write to Onesimus a letter which would have anticipated Lloyd Garrison, and would have been disappointed by the Apostle's "want of courage."[1]

His resistance was ineffectual, as he had foreseen. From those whom he withstood—they should not be called opponents—he received something more than courtesy; and he was grateful. But it was the parting of one more link. He had already separated himself from his allies in politics; he had practically withdrawn from the Congregational Union; now he found himself outside the Nonconformist Federation in his own town. The sense of isolation was deepened. He felt more than ever alone.

The letters that follow sufficiently indicate the kind of life that he was leading at this time.

To Mr. W. T. Stead

13th December 1892.

It was very kind of you to send me your Christmas number[2] and the private note which came with it. I have read the story through; it happened to reach me just before I had rather a bad day or two, and as I was unable to work I went under your conduct to Chicago.

You have succeeded, I think, beyond hope in your curious attempt to blend story and guide-book and psychical mystery into one; just now and then I came upon a lump of guide-book which had remained insoluble; but on the whole you have been very successful.

I read with care the passage to which you called my special

[1] The most complete statement of his position in relation to this question may be found in the sermon "Christ and the State," on the text, "Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take Him by force, to make Him King, withdrew again into the mountain Himself alone" (John vi. 15).—*Fellowship with Christ and other Discourses*, pp. 192-215. See p. 602.

[2] *How Christ came to Chicago.*

attention. What strikes me about it is that it gives precisely that account of the invisible life which I should have expected you to give, apart from the control and assistance of one who had made personal experience of it. It is "W. T. S.—his mark." It may have been written under abnormal conditions, but it bears too plainly the features of a child of your very life for there to be any mistake about the parentage.

Of course there remain to be accounted for those parts of the story—the Minerva passage, for example—which were written without any knowledge on your part of what they meant. These point to mysterious susceptibilities and powers which deserve the consideration of thoughtful people. They may belong to the region of hypnotism. "There are more things in heaven and earth"—you know the rest. But with what little knowledge I have gained of these things from persons who have made them subjects of serious inquiry, I have come to the conclusion that when a man submits himself to experiment he surrenders for the time the integrity of his self-command; allows a break to be made in the fences which protect his personality; runs grave risks of madness or worse. If I may put it so, there seems to me to be a sacrifice of the chastity of our inner personal life in these inquiries, which may have results on the higher nature analogous to those which follow the grosser physical offence, and still more ruinous.

Liberavi animum. But a merry Christmas to you!

To Mr. W. T. Stead

16th December 1892.

One word of explanation in answer to your interesting letter. I thought that I had passed from the mystery of Mediumship to the mystery of Hypnotism and the like before I spoke of surrendering one's personality to the control of another, with all its terrible consequences. As yet I am not clear that what happens when a person supposes himself to be a medium may not be referred to the automatic action of brain and intellect. I remember, for example, watching myself speak, listening to myself as though the speaker were wholly another, and as though I had no part in the performance except to listen, like one of the audience. It was an odd experience and it lasted for several minutes; then I recovered myself. This happened in the Manchester Free Trade Hall. I asked Rogers afterwards whether he had noticed a monotonous and mechanical passage in my speech, and after a time he recalled the passage in which—if I believed with you

—I should say that I was a medium. But it was all my own; what happened—how it happened—I can't tell, but it was "automatic."[1] Hypnotism is another matter; it was to this and similar phenomena that I intended some sentences at the close of my letter to apply.

To ——

1st December 1892.

It is a great happiness to me to receive your affectionate letter and to know that you, too, are stronger than you were a year ago. What a paradox it is that with our great hopes for the life to come we should still cling to the present life. And yet there is reason in it. By suffering as well as service we are being disciplined for a larger and fuller and more varied blessedness. The trouble is that ideals of fidelity seem so inaccessible. I suppose that one reason is—this is a bit for you as well as for myself—we are so very much disposed to construct ideals for ourselves instead of taking the actual work of life and doing it as well as we can to please Christ.

I suppose too—and this also is a bit for you as well as for myself—that the wise thing is to take it for granted that we *cannot* know how things are going with us except that we may rely on God's infinite mercy to save us. Beyond this we have to wait for the great day. With regard to the worth of our *work* I am clear that this is so. The other day I preached a sermon in which I thought that I had quite missed and failed of my aim, and I found that beyond anything that I had said for a long time it had reached and impressed some whom I most desired to reach. Thanks for the case; it will do admirably: I hope that it may hold some sermons that may give comfort and light and courage to the maker of it.

To Mr. George Marris

29th December 1892.

How the years drift away! And what thankfulness ought you and I to have who have so many years behind us and cannot have very many before us—though you are likely to have many more than I—that we have been brought thus far without wreck. I feel this more and more. Merely to have been kept from ruin seems to me so great a thing. . . .

[1] See pp. 385-386.

What Canon Liddon wrote to me very shortly before his death is very much in my thoughts. Referring to his sharp and agonising sufferings, which he regarded as giving him a fresh opportunity for exercising unfaltering faith in the Divine love and perfect submission to the Divine will, he said, "Pray for me that they may not be laid against me in that great day." If he had occasion so to think of physical tortures, I have much more reason to cherish similar thoughts in relation to the prolonging of my life and ministry.

TO THE REV. GEORGE BARBER

LLANBEDR, *6th January* 1893.

I am greatly enjoying the quiet; on the whole, this absolute rest suits me better than anything else. I do not read very much, nor do I think very much; but I succeed in laying by just a little thought for a rainy day. I meditate on the sermons that I want to preach on Christian doctrine. Yesterday, or the day before, I think that I succeeded in sketching one on God in Christ.

TO THE BISHOP OF DURHAM

31st January 1893.

I am delighted to hear that your recent visit to Birmingham was pleasant to yourself; to us it was pleasant, and very much more. The impression which your address produced upon those who heard it, especially on the masters and mistresses, was deep, and, I trust, will be enduring. The bailiff will send you a copy of the resolution to put with the letter which you received from his remote predecessor.[1]

Accept my hearty thanks for the copy of your Primary Charge. I have read it with perfect sympathy. There are passages in it which, with God's blessing, will, I trust, do great good.

There is only one observation that I venture to offer on it. In its early pages you insist emphatically on the true idea of the brotherhood spoken of in the New Testament: it is the brotherhood of those who have ethically realised that union

[1] The Bishop of Durham, Dr. Westcott, a former pupil of King Edward's School, had visited Birmingham, and had given an address to the masters and mistresses of the schools on that Foundation. The letter referred to is one which Dr. Westcott received "from the bailiff of the day about forty-seven years ago on some successes which were given me at Cambridge."

with the Eternal Son of God to which the grace of God has destined all men. You also insist with emphasis on the cognate truth—or rather, it is the same truth under another aspect—that our sonship to God in Christ has to be ethically realised. But much of what you have written later in the Charge appears to rest on the assumption that all men are actually brothers in Christ and sons of God in Him.

I was probably the more impressed with this because I think that I have recently discovered a want of coherence in what I myself have been accustomed to say on these matters. As a descendant of the Puritans, this is in me inexcusable. I have always, I think, seen very clearly that we are "children of God" (1) by faith (2) in Christ Jesus; but I have talked loosely about sonship and Fatherhood.

Of course if the Divine ideal *must* be realised, the potential may be treated as if it were actual. This appears to be the manner of John when he is speaking of those who have really received the eternal life, although, as yet, they are very far from having made all its power their own. When, indeed, through all the ages, will any of us make all its power our own? But it does not seem to be the New Testament manner in relation to those who have not become incorporate with Christ by Faith. The tares are not regarded as wheat, though the wheat which is hardly above the ground is spoken of as though it were in the golden ear.

To the Rev. J. P. Perkins

28th March 1891.

I know of no satisfactory account of the Divine Fatherhood. Dr. Candlish wrote a book on the subject which I read thirty years ago or more; it did not satisfy me at the time, but I think there were some good things in it. I have often preached about it and have a theory; but I do not remember that there is anything to indicate my position in what I have published. The main points seem to me to be these:—

1. Our ideal relation to God is that of sons; this comes from our creation in Christ.

2. Sonship involves community of life—life derived from life. But the life of God has essentially an ethical quality; it is a holy life.

3. Ethical quality cannot be simply given; it must be freely appropriated. We were created to be sons; but to be sons really and in fact we must freely receive and realise in character the holiness of God.

4. There is a potency of sonship in every man, and ideally every man is a son; but it is only as a man *becomes* like God that he actually *becomes* a son. This, in the case of all who know Christ, is effected initially by receiving Christ; when He is freely accepted as the Root and Lord of life the principle of sonship is in us.

This approaches the Divine Fatherhood from the human side; but I think that it is in this way that we can best approach it.

To the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare

17th February 1893.

The responsibility of replying to the questions in your letter is very grave; but I will answer them as accurately as I am able, and with perfect frankness.

I will begin with your postscript. It was true for many years that the people of Birmingham were less accessible to religious thought and influence than people elsewhere; at least I thought so. Their life was a full life; large numbers of them had increased their material resources very rapidly; the old Liberal party, before the split, had in a lower form many of the qualities of a church, and interest in politics was very keen and almost universal. I have said very often during the last eight or ten years that a great though gradual change seemed to me to have come about in the temper of the city. Many causes have contributed to this which I cannot enumerate. But now, I do not know that we are harder or more secular than other people; and there are very many who are living a thoroughly Christian life.

The Hagley Road Church has, as you say, wealthy people about it. In my judgment, we have cared too little about saving the wealthy, and then have denounced them for their luxury and selfishness. In every part of the country I hear of the mischievous result of an almost exclusive solicitude for the salvation of the working people; and I think that it is time to remember that Christ died for the rich and for the cultivated as well as for the ignorant and the poor. But in addition to the rich there are thousands of people within half a mile of the Church of the Redeemer living in houses rented at from £35 to £50; and indeed I am very much mistaken if within that area there are not large numbers living in houses rented at a much lower figure.

Any amount of work is within reach of the congregation if they are willing to do it. To take one illustration only:—the

Men's Morning School which has been largely worked by the Hagley Road Church may be the centre of innumerable evangelistic and philanthropic agencies. This is within easy reach. To predict with confidence that you would fill the church soon and create a powerful congregation would be presumptuous. Who can tell? In every change there is always a venture—an act of faith. But it is my conviction that you would. ——'s failure, which I deeply regret, counts for nothing. Owing perhaps to bad health he was very unequal in his preaching: he could do divinely; but if report is to be trusted he did it only occasionally. And his best was often remote from the lives of common men. It fascinated thoughtful and mystical women: God bless them! They are a good sort. But our Lord did not deliver the discourse in John xiv.-xvi. in the presence of the multitude when they gathered on the mountains above the lake. If He had they would not have heard Him out. Then again, I believe that —— lived a very isolated life. He saw very little of his people; and if I may judge from his attendance, or rather non-attendance, at our ministers' meetings, he saw very little of his brethren. He is a man to whom contact with life and thought other than his own is indispensable; and he got on to the top of a pillar in the desert like Simon; only, unlike Simon, his standing there attracted no curiosity.

There is one point I have omitted. Look at the list of your ministers in Birmingham, and then judge how much you might do for the churches in the city. You would come here with the power of your ten years' ministry behind you, and with all the disciplined strength you have received from it. Not on the next morning after you moved—nor in the next month—but within a year or two your position here would be inevitably one of great power and responsibility. My own work must soon be done. You and Houghton would lead the Baptist and Independent churches of the city.

I think that I have covered your inquiries. God help you! I have known the misery of having to look at a question of this kind and can sympathise with you.

To Chief-Justice Way

Llanbedr, *13th March* 1893.

It is very kind and generous for a busy man like you to write to me. Your letter has found me at our little cottage in Wales, some seven or eight miles north of Barmouth. I was rather run

down, and so Mrs. Dale and I have got away for a parson's fortnight. We have been here for a week and I am already very much better.

As far as I can judge, the quality of my work is no worse than usual; but I cannot sit at my desk for many hours in the day, and I get tired sooner than I like. Very much of my work in the week I give to my assistant, and I am trying to keep out of general public work. In the early winter I wrote a biographical sketch of my old tutor, Henry Rogers, to be prefixed to a new edition of his *Superhuman Origin of the Bible*. I think that you told me that you had read his *Eclipse*; if so, you will be interested in learning something about him, and I have asked the publishers to send you a copy. I have also asked them to send with it a copy of Dr. Fairbairn's new book. At present I have read only about two-thirds of it; whether the constructive part will wholly suit me, I am not sure; but the historical and critical part is admirably done. He uses his learning with consummate ease.

I have been watching with great concern the financial troubles which have been accumulating on the Australian colonies. Some of my friends have been hit very hard. I agree with you that the facility with which the young heir has obtained loans on the security of his prospects has been a terrible temptation. It is an evil thing for nations as well as for individuals to be able so easily to mortgage their future.

I am too little in political society to be able to form any confident judgment on our own position; but it is difficult to believe that Mr. Gladstone's Irish Bill can become law without very serious changes—if indeed it can pass in any form. He is playing a bold game. His Liquor Bill and his Suspensory Bill (Welsh Church) are intended to quiet some of the sections of his own party that threatened to be troublesome; but I think that they will do more to feed the fires of the opposition than to strengthen the loyalty of his supporters. What experience I have had of politics has led me to the conclusion that the extreme teetotallers are not worth buying at a high price: they are mostly ardent Radicals, and the cases are very rare in which they would abstain from voting for a Radical, whatever his views might be on Local Option; the cases are rarer still in which their fidelity to Local Option would make them vote Tory. The Welsh members—or the majority of them—would, I think, have gone into revolt if he had not done something for them. But to infuriate the publicans and the Church is a desperate measure when he has such a thorny business as the Irish Bill on hand. But what an amazing old man he is!

TO THE REV. DR. PATON

10th April 1893.

Hearty thanks for your cordial letter. In the lonely life which I am now living it is pleasant to be assured that my old friends have not forgotten me, and that their affection for me is undiminished. You, too, have had much of the "chastisement" which God suffers to come on those whom He loves; and you have learnt, I dare say, how much more grace is needed to endure than to work. But perhaps in the suffering we more easily discover how sorely we need the grace. Looking back upon the years of my activity, I wonder how much of what seemed zeal and earnestness had any divine quality in it: many forces, earthly and heavenly, may impel us to work; it is only the heavenly that can make us perfectly trustful and submissive in suffering.

I wish that I could say Yes to your invitation; but I greatly shrink from intellectual strain. I can work well enough at times—but only at times; and, further, what little strength remains I want to use to carry out a scheme of sermons which I have long had in my mind and from which I do not want to be diverted. You must look to a younger, or, at least, a stronger man.

TO MR. E. A. LAWRENCE

6th May 1893.

Hearty thanks for the copy of *Faith and Criticism*.[1] I congratulate you very sincerely on your own paper; it contains, I think, very much that is admirable, and is excellently written. Twenty years ago, I think that I should have accepted its main point with much more complete concurrence than I can now. At that time—or about that time—I was accustomed to insist incessantly on submission to the authority of Christ as the critical act of the soul, though I think that even then I began by dwelling on the redemption which Christ had achieved for the race—the change which He had brought about in the relation of every man to God; and connected the recognition of this more closely with submission to His authority than I think is done in your paper. Explicitly or implicitly, submission to our Lord's authority is present in every act of faith; but

[1] A volume of essays by some younger Congregational ministers. See p. 636.

faith is rather the answer of the soul to a revelation of grace than the submission of the soul to the assertion of authority.

I have read two or three of the other papers. Horton's is excellent as far as it goes, though it does not strike me as showing his real power. Forsyth's, which I have not quite finished and do not as yet wholly understand, is, out of sight, the most brilliant and vigorous. Bennett's and Adeney's do not strike me as containing much that is fresh; and I doubt whether conservative people will find much comfort in Bennett's "compensation." I have not turned up the two similar volumes which appeared many years ago—*Ecclesia;* but the difference between the subjects of the earlier volumes, as far as I can remember them, and of this last strikingly illustrates the movement through which we have been passing in the interval.

During the spring and summer of 1893 his health was less fluctuating. At the end of April he preached at Kensington, in the course of the centenary commemoration of the church at Allen Street, and in May for the London Missionary Society at Union Chapel, Islington—as had been his custom for many years during Dr. Allon's lifetime. (This must have been the last occasion on which he took part in any public service in London.) Before and after his summer holiday he preached regularly at Carr's Lane until the middle of September, when he was again laid aside by two attacks of illness following in rapid succession. He could not attend the Church Congress which met in Birmingham during the first week of October, or present the address of welcome which he had prepared on behalf of the Nonconformist churches. His recovery was slow, and he twice attended the Sunday services before he was allowed to preach. But he was not entirely cut off from work. During the enforced seclusion he began to put into shape the discourses on doctrine which had long been in his mind. He also wrote a few articles—for the *Independent* a sketch of Calvinistic Methodism in Wales as he knew it, and for the *British Weekly* a biographical account of his friend Dr. Porter, the late President of Yale, and also a careful review of a volume of sermons by Dr. Berry. He also began to revise—probably at this time—the manuscript of his Congregational

History. He had occupation enough to save him from unbearable restlessness, but the longing for his pulpit and his people rarely left him. "To see your faces," he wrote, "and to join with you in worship is for me one of the best as well as the most delightful of tonics"; and he was ill content that his doctors had not recognised it as the true remedy.

To the President and the Members of the Church Congress

3rd October 1893.

Brethren in Christ—We respectfully offer you a hearty welcome to this city. We earnestly trust that every meeting of this Congress will be consecrated and transfigured by manifestations of the grace and glory of our common Lord. If it were possible for us to regard with indifference an assembly so large as yours, and including in it so many men whom we honour for their high Christian character, their intellectual force, their learning, and the service which they are rendering to God and man, that gracious and august presence which by Christ's own words is assured, even to two or three of the humblest and obscurest of His disciples, gathered together in His name, would draw to your meeting our deep interest and devout sympathy. We are sorrowfully conscious that in our own assemblies we have too often missed the blessedness of that presence when we might have known it, but we trust and pray that during this week you may be so vividly conscious that Christ is with you that your recollections of the awe and the joy which He inspired may be distinct and enduring in years that are still in the remote future, and when the wisest, most animating, and most impressive words that you may hear from your brethren shall leave hardly any trace in your memory.

We gratefully acknowledge the aid in our Christian life and in our ministry which we have received from the preachers, theologians, and saints of the Church which is represented in this Congress. We trust that the great succession may be long maintained. The homely vigour and robust courage of Hugh Latimer, a predecessor in the see of Worcester of the distinguished President of this Congress, the splendours of Jeremy Taylor, the sagacity of Isaac Barrow, the stately and earnest eloquence of Liddon, and, speaking in this city, which for many years was his home, may we be permitted to add, the searching

and penetrating power of the sermons of John Henry Newman, while he was still at Oxford,—we pray that they may reappear in large numbers of your clergy, both in this generation and in the generations that are to come. May there be among the masters and leaders of your thought men who shall possess the majesty of Hooker, the deep, calm wisdom of Butler, the learning of Pearson, of Bull, and of Lightfoot. May you long maintain the gracious tradition of the saintliness of Henry Venn and Charles Simeon, of John Keble, of Bishop Andrewes and Bishop Wilson, and the missionary passion of Henry Martyn and Selwyn and Patteson. We shall be enriched by these golden gifts which we trust that God will bestow upon you, and in sharing your wealth with us you will not be impoverished.

Brethren, our presence on this platform, not as members of the Congress, but as visitors to whom your courtesy allows the opportunity of addressing you, reminds both you and us that on some subjects which are of grave importance in relation to the organisation and life of Christian Churches we hold different judgments. We do not believe that either loyalty to Christ or Christian charity requires either you or us to be always silent on these differences or to depreciate their importance. But in Christ we are members one of another. We are troubled by whatever lessens your spiritual force and the effectiveness of your spiritual work; we rejoice in all your spiritual successes; and we pray that to your bishops and curates and all congregations committed to their charge, God will grant in continually increasing measures the healthful spirit of His grace.

To Mrs. Holder

3rd December 1893.

Your letter gave me a great deal of pleasure. Detached as I have been for a long time from nearly all work outside Birmingham, it is a delight to be assured that old friends have not forgotten me. And it was very pleasant to be told that you and Mr. Holder are sufficiently interested in the supreme objects of thought to read a book like my *Atonement*. There are a great many very good people who seem unwilling to do anything for the maintenance of their religious life that requires the use of their understanding; as a result, their life suffers in depth and force. I am very conscious—as indeed I always was—that the latter part of my book contains only the rudiments of a theory of the relation between the Death of Christ and the forgiveness of sin; but whatever else I might have to say about it as the

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result of the experience of the last eighteen years I should have —as far as I remember—nothing to unsay. As far as it goes, I believe that what I wrote then is true and solid. In a year or two, and when I have got through some other things that I want to do, I may revise the book—if I have life and strength—add a few notes and write a new preface; but I believe that the body of the lectures will remain unchanged.

TO THE REV. DR. GUINNESS ROGERS

3rd December 1893.

I had kept in my clip the affectionate letter which you wrote me after your visit a few weeks ago, intending to write to you soon; and now I have another to thank you for, and I thank you for it with all my heart. Whether your hopes will be fulfilled and a moderate measure of strength come back to me, enabling me to continue public work for a few years longer, who can tell? I sometimes—and indeed generally—trust and wish that it may be so. Each of my last two illnesses has been less severe than the preceding one, and much less alarming; but, of course, each attack diminishes whatever reserve of strength is left to me. The physician in Birmingham who has seen me from time to time during the last two years smiled as he said on Tuesday, "You have a wonderful way of picking up"; he thought at the close of 1892—or rather in July 1892—that I had not much resource to draw upon. With his consent I preached *this morning*; it tired me. Mrs. Dale insists that I preached over forty minutes; but it has done me no harm, and I shall probably be less tired next Sunday. I seem to have so much to say that I want to preach and write a little longer—and yet I tremble; my hold of what is highest and deepest seems so uncertain and so intermittent. But I fear that I have done so much harm in many ways that I should be thankful—if God will only give me grace, and if He does not despair of me—to have another chance. I am grateful that in His infinite compassion He has done some good through me in past years; it humbles me and rebukes me, for it shows how much He might have done had I been faithful; so that the measure of usefulness He has given me seems rather a reproach than an encouragement. It is very terrible. But enough of this.

One of the points which has pressed upon me very heavily during the last ten weeks is that in my resentment against the evil which had come from making the ministry a profession, I realised most inadequately that it is a vocation. Of course I knew and felt that it was a vocation—a most blessed and

glorious though perilous one—but I did not get even near the heart of what it must mean to be "separated unto the gospel of God"; when I have a chance—if I have one—I want to preach on that. I do not know that I should make it an occasion for a series of what Augustine would have called *retractationes*, for this would merely provoke controversy. But I should like to put positively what seems the true position. The trouble is that between the inward thought and the outward expression the gulf is so wide and deep. I felt this keenly this morning when I tried to say some of the things which have greatly possessed me during my illness.

To Mrs. Stuart

12th December 1893.

I am getting better, and preached yesterday for the first time since the second Sunday in September; but I feel rather like a ship that can't get quite over the bar at the mouth of the harbour; with another foot or two of water, I could get away into the open sea. The tide rises slowly, but it continues to rise.

How sorry I am for all you political people; what a miserable, dreary time it must be at Westminster! And in some directions which still interest me in a languid way there are formidable signs of reaction. The anti-liberal party in Education seems to be more hopeful and resolute than it has been at any time since the National Education Union—as I think it was called—broke up after the Act of 1870. Acland is straight and courageous; but the forces on the other side are very strong, and I have seen indications of a disposition to make disastrous compromises where I should have least expected it.

To Miss Clara Jeeves

5th December 1893.

Just as my strength was failing before my recent illness, I had a letter from you which I put aside to answer. I wonder whether since then—for it is three months ago—the great things have become clearer to you. What strikes me most powerfully about your letter is this: you should give God thanks that He has made you dissatisfied with your life. Be sure of it, the conviction that you had fallen short of Christ's will came from God's merciful and gracious Spirit, not from yourself. "Whom He loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that He receiveth." You have had your scourging; it is a proof given direct from

Aged 64.

God to yourself that He has not forsaken you, and that the true life is not to be despaired of.

The next thing that strikes me is this: He has enabled you to receive with faith the disclosures which have humbled and distressed you. It was these disclosures which were to be the beginning of a new time to you. You have not rejected them, or struggled against them; or if you have struggled, the struggle has been subdued. This direct personal dealing with you should give you larger courage to receive all the wonderful assurances given to the world through Christ of God's mercy. "He suffered for sins once, the Righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God." That He desires to bring you to God you cannot doubt: the scourging confirms, or should confirm, your faith in this. But He must bring you in His own way: the patient does not prescribe to the physician how he is to be treated; or the traveller to the guide by what path he is to be led. This you may be sure of, that if you avail yourself of the opportunities of serving others that lie nearest to you, and actually serve them, you will gradually become more and more unselfish. But do not ask for great opportunities of service, or be disappointed if you feel no glow of devotion to other people or even to God. We are all too anxious to be conscious of beautiful feelings; they comfort us and lead us to think that we are in the right way; but the real test is obedience—doing the right things as far as we know them. Feelings are very misleading: let them come when they come; do not be disheartened if they do not come, or if when they come they soon vanish. This I think is the path to higher perfection; at any rate no other path is certain. Hold fast to the assurance that God wants you to have the mind of Christ; pray for it; but meanwhile, whether your heart goes with it or not, try in humble, unostentatious ways to serve Christ by serving others.

To the Rev. F. H. Stead

6th December 1893.

Accept my thanks for your kind present of a copy of your new book.[1] I have gone through it—rapidly, of course, and superficially—and am impressed by the immense amount of work and thought that you have put into it. In the hands of an effective teacher (especially of one who differed from you on some important points!) it might be made a most useful text-book for a Bible Class.

[1] *The Kingdom of God: A Plan of Study.*

I can hardly, on so rapid an examination, venture to express a judgment on some critical questions, but there are one or two things which perhaps you will allow me to say. I think that like some others of our younger theologians you permit the characteristic elements of prophetism, which hoped to realise the Kingdom of God in a visible earthly state, to exert too much influence over you. The prophets are no doubt noble, stirring, animating; but prophetism was a failure—so great a failure that according to the modern theory it had to be followed by a rigorous external and ceremonial law.

Another matter of still greater importance which I should despair of making clear in a few sentences is your estimate of the revelation of God in Christ during His humiliation (and especially to the people of Galilee whose ethical and spiritual condition rendered them incapable of the higher disclosures of the life and thought of God) as compared with the revelation which has come with the Spirit of Christ—a revelation which immensely changes, illuminates, and transfigures the earthly story of our Lord. I do not believe that after our Lord departed from the world—withdrew His visible presence—the light which had come into the world declined: it grew and grew, and I find in the Epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians a fuller manifestation of the mind of Christ than in the Sermon on the Mount.

Another point is, that revelation in its *form* must be largely determined by the conditions of those to whom it comes; the form of the Kingdom was what Jewish history and thought provided; among the Gentiles that form—if it had been made as prominent as in our Lord's ministry—would have concealed rather than disclosed His meaning. I wonder whether these broken sentences are intelligible. I hope that things are going well with you.

To Miss A. M. Davies

29th December 1893.

. . . Mrs. Dale is reading Stanley's Life to me in the evenings. My publishers usually send me a Stilton cheese at Christmas—have sent it, I think, for twenty years; but by some happy inspiration (I am not allowed to take cheese now!) they have this year sent Stanley instead.

It is very interesting, and I hope to feel the charm of Stanley as I have not felt it before. I met him at dinner at Dr. Allon's some years ago, with Mr. Binney, Dean Alford, Dr. Reynolds, Hutton of the *Spectator*, Matthew Arnold, and some other interesting men, and though he talked pleasantly, there was for me

no spell in it. I thought that perhaps there were too many others present for me to discover the attraction of Stanley; but I met him afterwards at a breakfast where he and I were the only guests; and I went chiefly because, when I had begged our host to excuse me, he said that the Dean had expressed a wish to meet me. I thought that there would be a good chance of being drawn to him, but though he was extremely pleasant the charm did not work. I am hoping, as I have said, that his Life will at last touch me, for I like to feel affection for men who draw to themselves much love; not to feel it suggests uncomfortable thoughts about one's sensitiveness to what is morally attractive.

I have just finished the first two volumes of Pusey's Life, and the change to Stanley is very striking. I am doubtful whether Stanley will "find" me as Pusey did. What a man that was! I seemed to know all about him before I began; and, indeed, the new facts illustrating the rise of the Tractarian Movement and Pusey's part in it are very few indeed; but I closed the book with a deep impression of the nobleness and massiveness of his nature, and feeling more than ever that the power of God was in him. The absence of joy in his religious life was only the inevitable effect of his conception of God's method of saving men; in parting with the Lutheran truth concerning Justification he parted with the springs of gladness.

Thank you very much for all your affectionate good wishes. It is pleasanter than you can imagine to find, as one grows older and loses year after year the dear friends of earlier days, that other friends are given whose affection brightens the dull sky and warms the chill air. I trust that the New Year will bring to all of you at Treborth—not only the greater and more enduring blessings of God's grace, but a thousand pleasant things to make life easy and happy.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE DARK VALLEY

New tenderness—Carr's Lane Reunion—Letters to friends—Sense of loneliness—Mr. Harrison's death—A birthday letter—Resolution of the Congregational Union—The Bishop of Durham's letter—Discourses on Christian Doctrine—The Bishop of Winchester's letter—Last letters—The approach of death—Memorials.

IN the spring of 1894 it was a delight to find himself once more in regular work, and to be assured that he could still speak with clearness and force. Indeed it was evident, even to himself, that his experience of suffering and silence, without relaxing his intellectual grasp of the great truths of revelation, had brought with it a new power. It was not merely that he had become less reticent about himself, and that the veil of reserve, so rarely lifted in earlier years, was now withdrawn. Nor was it an enlargement of human sympathy, and nothing more. His personality had been touched and transformed. One who had often heard him in the days of his strength, listening to him now, carried away a wholly new conception of his preaching. Aged 64.

> The contrast between the mental vigour and the physical weakness created the impression of a man helped by some power not his own. . . . His great force had become wreathed in tenderness. A new pathos had come into the voice that made the delivery perfect. There was something musical in his tones. It was like no other voice I ever heard.[1]

Two sermons delivered at this time—one on the "New

[1] Dr. Reuen Thomas of Boston, Massachusetts.

Name" (Rev. ii. 17), the other on the "Crown of Life" (James i. 12) deeply impressed those who heard them, filling their hearts with forebodings of impending loss; so full, so vivid was his sense of speedy escape from the limitations and infirmities of this world into the endless life beyond, with its unknown expansion of power and achievement. But he did not allow himself either in private meditation or in public ministry to be wholly engrossed by such themes as these. Before the summer ended, as if to link the opening of his pastorate with its close, he completed the series of discourses on doctrine, published in the autumn. At the same time he began an exposition of the Epistle of James, so dealing side by side with creed and conduct, ethics and theology—principles too often divorced by religious teachers.

It was not a year of incident, but one occurrence should not pass unnoticed. In March—at the suggestion of Mr. Hotchkiss, who spared no pains to carry out the project—a Reunion was held at Carr's Lane of members who had been in fellowship with the church during any part of the years 1853-1863, the first decade of Dale's ministry. Many of these were still there; others had been transferred to churches in the suburbs and elsewhere. One hundred and fifty met on the evening of 13th March, and letters received from all parts of the country showed how strong an attachment to the church and its pastor was still cherished by many who could not be present. The address read by the Chairman, Mr. Joseph Warden, had the warmth and the felicity that nothing but genuine affection can bestow, and the faces—some familiar, some half-forgotten—spoke with an eloquence of their own. Dale's speech in reply was rich in personal reminiscences, of his experiences as Mr. James's colleague—though he said more about Mr. James than about himself—and of the early period of his sole pastorate up to the time when he began to touch a wider circle outside his own church, and to enter upon an ampler and a more public service. He spoke with deep emotion, as well he might. It was, he said, as if a long-vanished

period of his life had suddenly taken form and stood before him once more; and to find himself face to face with those to whom he had preached the gospel in the beginning of his ministry—men and women who after thirty or forty years were still striving to do the will of God, still loyal to their first faith—was a strange and affecting experience. They were there—many of them; and it was a delight to see them, and to feel that his work had not been altogether in vain. But he could not forget those who had fallen asleep and those who had fallen away; and the pleasure was not unmixed with pain.

During these months he wrote freely to his friends. He had larger leisure than he had ever known before; for even when he was at his best, serious work in an evening was strictly prohibited. His letters—only a few can be selected—show the gradual detachment that was taking place in his life: he begins to look even at his work as a minister as if it were already something remote and outside himself.

To Chief-Justice Way

18th February 1894.

My dear Lieutenant-Governor [1]—Ever since I heard of the new distinction conferred upon you I have wanted to send congratulations. It can add nothing to your own position in South Australia, but it will be a gratification to yourself because it will be a gratification to your innumerable friends both in Australia and in England.

If I may judge from the newspapers, your reign commenced in a time of depression, if not of disaster, and I trust that you will have the satisfaction of seeing that the clouds have begun to scatter before you lay down your authority.

It must be a curious experience for a man to feel that he has no one above him within twelve or thirteen thousand miles. That abstract thing the law, however, assumes, I suppose, a personality to a Judge, and is always present, not as an abstraction, but as a Power.

[1] He had recently been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of South Australia.

You will be interested to know that I have had the courage to begin a course of sermons on Christian doctrine with a view to publication. I have got through seven out of twelve or fourteen. It has seemed to me for some years that the vagueness of thought which prevails among intelligent people with regard to Christian doctrine is a serious injury to the vigour of religious life. The injury is the graver because of the increasing precision with which men are thinking about natural phenomena. In one region of the intellectual life there is granite, above it are clouds.

It is a cowardly thing, perhaps, but I am glad to be wholly out of politics. Collision with old friends would be inevitable if I had not withdrawn altogether, and this would be a great pain to me. And as the shadows lengthen I am more disposed than in past years to think that perhaps my "vocation," if indeed I have one, requires an abstention from the actual conflict of political life. It is late to have made the discovery, but the ghost came to me some years ago when I was giving some attention to the history of the later Puritanism. There is something startling in the sudden extinction of the fires which burnt during the Commonwealth; twenty years after Cromwell's death the fervour and zeal were almost gone: twenty years later still they had quite vanished. The question assailed me, whether the explanation did not lie in part in the premature attempt to apply to the political order the laws of a diviner kingdom and to do it by direct political action. But that would require a dissertation.

To Mrs. ———

2nd March 1894.

I have been startled and a little alarmed by seeing the announcement that Mr. —— does not intend to stand for —— at the next election; it would be a relief to know that this is not occasioned by any serious failure of health.

It is possible—very possible—that I am disposed to think too gloomily of the prospects of the Liberal party; but to me it seems a misfortune that men like Mr. —— should disappear from Parliament. Increasingly the party seems to be passing into the hands of men who are without that sobering influence which long familiarity with the practical business of life exerts on a man's political theories and actions. "Professors" require to be balanced, not by agitators, but by men whose judgment has been disciplined by the administration of large concerns;

and at present, theorists and agitators seem to be getting the party more and more into their hands.

However, if in the absence of any urgent reason for retirement on the ground of health, it seems desirable that Mr. ——'s work should be lessened, his friends, though they may regret it on public grounds, will admit that he has for many years rendered the party and the country good service and has earned the right to some relief.

To ——

5th March 1894.

My dear old Friend—I am concerned to see that the remembrance of the trouble at —— has been revived. Is it not time that it should be forgotten, and all the real or imagined injuries which you received forgotten? You know that I had the heartiest sympathy with you in the pain that you felt in being obliged to leave the church with which you had been so long connected and which you had so nobly served. But I want you to serve it still by letting the past be dead. Whatever complaint you may think that you have reason to make against Mr. —— on the ground of his words at ——, the words are two years old and might well have been allowed to remain unnoticed. Is it not our clear duty, whatever personal offence we may think that we have received at any time, to pass it over for the sake of maintaining mutual affection and confidence among our brethren in Christ? It is not as if you were a young man who may have need to defend his reputation; whatever can be said against you—whether it is true or false—will not diminish the affection and esteem in which we hold you. What is the good of being eighty-four if a man cannot trust himself to his friends?

To Mrs. Richard Davies

Llanbedr, *1st April* 1894.

There is no English service here this morning; how can I use part of the leisure time better than in writing to you? Mrs. Dale showed me the affectionate letter which you wrote to her some weeks ago when we were arranging for our present holiday, and it drew me strongly to Treborth. But I felt too much like the "stricken deer" which leaves "the herd" and can find rest only in solitude, to venture. My last illness left me weaker than either of the preceding ones, and though I have been able to preach, I was conscious of a great want of buoyancy. During

the first ten days that I was here I began to think that even Llanbedr, with its perfect quiet, had lost its spell. But I am thankful to say that the springs of life have once more begun to flow, and I have good hopes that I shall go back to Birmingham greatly invigorated. And though I am not at Treborth I get something of the delight of being there. Now and then I see the summit of Snowdon, and this seems to bring all of you quite near. Your young people, I hope, are all well. They have been very kind to me, and it is always a source of happiness to think of them.

I wonder whether they have read Sabatier's Life of Francis of Assisi which is making such a stir in France. It is a long time since I read a book of equal charm. And though Sabatier belongs to the "left" wing of the Protestant Church, and his chilly theology sometimes crosses the tropical heat of St. Francis like an east wind, this happens but rarely, and I have found the book "edifying," to use the good old word, as well as delightful. It has added immensely to the pleasure and, I hope, something to the profit of my holiday.

There is something infinitely pathetic in the failure of St. Francis to carry his ideal into the minds and hearts even of those who most loved and honoured him. Sabatier is, I suppose, right in maintaining that the saint was dreaming of a free and spiritual, and, in a sense, a non-sacerdotal form of life; but the time had not come, nor was it possible that it should come without open revolt against Rome.

I was talking to Mrs. Rowland Jones a few days ago about the church here; and was glad to find that the old lady, who is very faithful to Calvinistic Methodist traditions, was hopeful. They had just had a prayer meeting at which there seemed to be a great deal of deep and intense earnestness, and she thought that when people find God in prayer God must be near to them. How I wish that I could believe that Welsh Disestablishment was likely to come within the next two or three years! The agitation cannot stop now that it has begun, but while it lasts it will be perilous to the higher life of all the Free Churches. I doubt whether, outside Wales, there is sufficient strength in the movement to compel the Lords to pass the Bill. In England the popular passion has all run into the channels of the various labour questions. In 1875 we seemed nearer to English Disestablishment than we seem now. I remember that the Bishop of Gloucester said that if the Church of England were given twenty years she would be safe. She has got her twenty years through Mr. Gladstone's absorption in Irish questions, and it looks as if she were safe for many years to come.

To Miss A. M. Davies

24th April 1894.

It was really very good of you to write so much. The letter came to me at a time when I wanted something to refresh and cheer me. You young people do not know how much the freshness and buoyancy of your life can do for those of us who are often weary of the world, or rather of ourselves.

For think how long a time I have been living with R. W. D. No doubt I have often got away from him. I often get away from him now. But he and I part company for so short a time at the longest; and there's no getting away from him for a whole day together. Even when I look at the grass and the sky I have to look at them through his eyes; and when I read Milton or Burke I have to take his impressions of them. If I could only have Milton to myself without R. W. D., what a delight it would be! Sometimes it almost seems as if the blessedness had come; but it turns out that R. W. D.'s limitations still prevent me from grasping all the wealth and seeing all the glory. And this inseparable companion of mine is of course not quite the same person that he was twenty years ago; if there were no change at all in him, he would be quite intolerable and he would drive me mad; but still I often find him a terrible bore. And so when a gracious friend like you comes and relieves me for a time of his dull presence, I am very grateful. Please put me down in the list of the infirm and the poor to whom you pay visits of charity.

What an odd thing it is—this sense of schism and difference between the real "I" and the organised life. Do you never feel that you would like to carry your "I" into another personality—to turn cuckoo and take possession for a time of another mortal's nest? I dare say that you do not feel it yet. I hope that you may not feel it forty years hence; for I have known some old ladies—more old ladies than old men—who seemed—shall I say?—as new, not merely as fresh, as they could have been when they were twenty or five-and-twenty.

I am reading Dr. Hort's Hulsean Lecture, *The Way, The Truth, and The Life*. I do not quite understand it yet; but I shall read it a second time with the hope of understanding it. He was a great friend and ally of Dr. Westcott's; they travelled together in the highest realms, and Hort reminds me constantly of Westcott. I want to learn, among other things, whether he had the same reluctance as Westcott to define his thought.

We are all well. I am trying with more or less success to

lay to heart the great moral lesson that I see at all the railway stations—"Don't worry: try Sunlight Soap." The "sunlight" is not always to be had; that is the trouble.

To the Rev. Dr. Mackennal

30th April 1894.

I appreciate the honour which your Committee have done me by the invitation to preside at the Birmingham (Free Church) Congress, and I feel very deeply the kindness of the letter in which you have conveyed it. But I have seen no reason to modify the judgment which I formed of the proposal to hold a Free Church Congress when we discussed it at Mr. Bunting's four or five years ago; and I am therefore obliged to decline the proposal. You are probably aware that I do not belong to the Birmingham Council which has invited the Congress.

It is a strange and unexpected experience which I have had during the last few years. First I was obliged to withdraw from old political associations; then very largely from Congregational associations; and at last, partly as the result of diminished strength, partly from other causes, I have had to dissolve or to refuse to form other ties which might have compensated in part for the earlier losses. But the isolation and loneliness are not without their blessedness and power.

From the Rev. Dr. Mackennal

Bowdon, *2nd May* 1894.

A sentence or two in your letter give me the opportunity of saying what I have long wanted to say, but shrank from thrusting on your notice.

I regret very much that we have not the benefit of your leadership and the help to many of our convictions, and much of our action, which would come from your agreement with us.

But I have again and again thanked God, when reading extracts from your sermons and references to your public utterances, as these have been reported, that He was vouchsafing you an intensive force which more than compensated for the loss of your general influence and supervision.

I am not afraid to say to you—for I am recognising the Divine source rather than thinking of your personal gifts and aptitudes—that you are doing a work now which marks you out as one of the Father's elect. You once said, I remember, "When God has confidence in one of His children, He is able to

give him whatever he would like"—this in reference to the story of Mr. Spurgeon and the opal ring, etc. I trust you have something of this experience; but there is another truth which you must not forget—"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." And your seclusion, painful as it is, is only a hiding in the secret of His tabernacle.

I would also suggest to you that you need not look at your present gainfulness through loss as casting any suspicion on the rightness of your former very active life. Who knows if you would have found so much of God in your seclusion if you had not sought to serve Him out in the open?

Forgive these bold speculations on you and yours; they are not irreverent. Nor am I presuming to lecture; but I should like to come in on the side of those thoughts of your own which may be hopeful rather than of those which may be despondent.

To the Rev. Dr. Mackennal

6th May 1894.

I am very grateful for your affectionate letter—grateful, though I cannot take all the comfort which you meant me to receive from it. God has been infinitely good and gracious to me, and His very goodness and graciousness make the review of life terrible. My ministry has been so different from what it might have been. And when I sometimes hear that what I have said or written has been of service to men, I am driven to a theory not unlike that by which some expositors have attempted to explain the miracle of Pentecost. The speakers were Galilean peasants and fishermen, and according to this theory they spoke their Galilean dialect; but by the power of the Spirit of God what they said seemed to the people who heard them a testimony delivered in their own tongue, though they came from many remote lands.—But the final judgment for me cannot be very far off, and God is merciful.

To the Rev. Dr. Paton

6th May 1894.

Hearty thanks for your affectionate and consolatory letter. That you should think that, through God's grace, my life has not been a great and flagrant failure—which I sometimes think it has been—ought to be a support to me; but since I have been laid aside from the more active life of former years it has become more and more apparent to me that God may do good work

through a man in which the man himself has no share, and which will not count for him in the Judgment. I can but leave myself in the hands of His infinite mercy.

I wonder whether you saw the whole of the letter in which I recalled our old *Eclectic* and *Patriot* years, or whether you saw only what appears in the *British Weekly*. I send you a copy of "Number Ten,"[1] for which the letter was written. There will be a second letter in the July number; for "Number Ten" is a kind of Quarterly Review.

I had occasion to look through the *Eclectic* for the year in which I began to write. I had kept no copy, and had to trust my memory for the first three or four articles. One of them—that on Benjamin Parsons—I was doubtful about, though I came to the conclusion that it was mine. I was particularly puzzled by a paragraph in which I deprecated the waste of strength occasioned by intermeddling with politics and other matters lying outside the direct line of ministerial work. It seemed odd that at the beginning of my ministry I should have seen—apparently with such clearness—the truth which has come home to me, as if it were quite fresh and unfamiliar, at the close of it. It is a clear case of seeing the better path and choosing the worse. Alas! Alas!

You, I hope, are strong enough to do a fair amount of work at the Institute.[2] If, by God's good help, you can send out a fair number of men with a deep and vivid realisation of the power and glory of the Christian redemption, you may be content that wider schemes of usefulness have been checked. I have not forgotten your early dreams of organising the work of a few Evangelical scholars for the literary and scholarly service of Christ. I suppose that you could not find the scholars.

To the Bishop of Worcester[3]

18th May 1894.

Allow me to congratulate you very heartily on the absence of your name from the signatures appended to the Episcopal manifesto on the Government Bill for the Disestablishment of the English Church in Wales. I can imagine—and yet perhaps I cannot—how severe an effort it needed to dissociate yourself in this movement from your episcopal brethren. Whatever may have been the grounds of your isolation, I thank God that you had the courage to be faithful to your own light.

[1] See p. 10.
[2] A Congregational College at Nottingham for ministerial training.
[3] Dr. J. J. S. Perowne.

I do not fail to pray that God will sustain you by His grace in your great and difficult position; I can do this without "conforming."[1]

TO THE REV. J. C. HARRISON

LLANBEDR, *14th July* 1894.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND—I am deeply concerned to hear of your illness. Some one told me of it a week ago and I wanted to write to you at once; but, being away from home, I had no means of getting at your address till Miss Harrison's note reached me this morning. But I have prayed that God would comfort, sustain, and relieve you. Indeed, my dear friend, you have been such a support to me for a long time, and your affection has been the source of so much happiness to me, that you had a place, long before I heard of your illness, in my daily intercessions. You cannot tell to what extent you have been a channel of God's blessing to me. God loves you well and has made you more than you can ever know in this world to your brethren. And whom He loveth He chasteneth. In weary nights when breathing was difficult and it seemed as though my heart must stop, and in nights when from physical causes a horror of great darkness came upon me, I have found, if not always comfort, a certain steadiness of mind in remembering this.

Sometimes, too, at such seasons I have been tortured by a sense of my unfaithfulness to God and the greatness of my sin; but then I have remembered that He *scourgeth* every son that He receiveth; and it is better to have the scourging with the sonship than to escape the scourging at the cost of losing the sonship. I trust that God may give you relief, and spare you to us for some time longer; for we sadly need you; but whatever comes, you know that you are in His strong and loving hands.

TO MISS HARRISON

LLANBEDR, *24th July* 1894.

I have just seen the announcement in yesterday's *Times*.[2] God be thanked that he has entered into rest. Last night,

[1] In so writing, Dale did not assume or suppose that the Bishop was in favour of the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church; he merely wished to express his admiration of the Bishop's courage in standing apart from his episcopal colleagues. "Of late years," he said in another letter, "I have known something of the effort necessary to dissociate oneself from the public action of old friends and comrades; and perhaps this made me the more ready to sympathise with your Lordship's position."

[2] The announcement of her father's death.

whenever I woke, I thought of him, and prayed that his night might be peaceful, that he might not have to endure distress, that he might be solaced and supported by God's presence; but instead of having a night of suffering he had already passed into the blessedness of the eternal Light.

There was no other man in our ministry who was so deeply and universally loved. Men who provoke no antagonism do not, for the most part, create much affection. But your father had no enemies, and the love he drew to himself was very strong and tender. We all felt that he had very much of the spirit of Christ in him; and the better we knew him we felt this the more.[1]

Allow me to express my affectionate sympathy with yourself. He relied very much upon you. You were a great consolation and support to him. You have done a great work which Christ will remember; and for the opportunity of doing it you may always be grateful. Those who loved him are grateful to you for all that you did for him. Cicero said of a friend that it was better to have the memory of him than to have the living friendship of other men; and to you your father's memory will always be a strength and joy.

Mrs. Dale unites with me in affectionate sympathy. God comfort you!

To Mr. E. Wheeler

Llanbedr, 16*th July* 1894.

I was glad to see, a few days ago, that you were through;[2] and I heartily congratulate you. Dr. Fairbairn had told me that when you went in you were not very well, and that this might destroy your chance of a first; in those circumstances you did well to get a second.

In the time which remains for you at Mansfield you will, I trust, work hard—not too hard—at your theology; and will also endeavour to construe theological truth under forms which will make it available for your preaching. There are methods of thought as unintelligible to ordinary people as the language of the schools; our thought, as well as our words, has to be translated into the vulgar style. And above all you will endeavour, in the light and power of the Spirit of God and in close fellowship with the Personal Christ, to look at the actual facts of human life and the power of the Christian redemption. For

[1] "It is a grace from heaven to be loved by such a man."—To Miss Harrison.

[2] Final Schools at Oxford.

the moment I suppose that your chief duty is to do nothing and to get vigorous.

To Mr. E. Wheeler

10th November 1894.

Your letter filled me with great thankfulness; not that I ever thought that you would remain very long among the cold and lifeless abstractions which were fascinating you a year ago, but you are making your escape sooner than might have been feared. Many of us have an experience of the kind; we need not be permanently the worse for it.

For myself I believe that the religious life is originated and sustained in activity by the actual experience of the objective reality of the Divine righteousness and grace, and the power and glory of Christ as the Redeemer of men. Dr. Nicoll in his notice of my new book[1] in the *British Weekly* has stated with great precision what, to use a pretentious word, is the "method" which I have endeavoured to apply to theological truth. Mr. Illingworth in his very remarkable *Bamptons* grasps the conception firmly: religious truth, he says, must be present in life before it can be definitely present in thought.

You are now on the true line of the preacher. Realise in experience—without haste and impatience—the contents of the Christian revelation, and then you will be able both to "think" and to state them. But, as I have said, avoid haste and impatience. These great things take time to know. I remember that when I discovered and knew that the Lord Jesus Christ is alive, I could think of nothing else and preach of nothing else for weeks. That is thirty years ago, and I sometimes wish that I could recall the vividness and delight of the discovery. It was a genuine Easter time. But I must not write more. God be with you.

To the Rev. George Barber

Llanbedr, *16th July* 1894.

I am getting through the proof of my sermons: here and there I have to add a passage to make the argument clearer; and I have to cut out epithets.

I am also reading Dr. Andrew Bonar's Life with much interest. He was a man of unusual devoutness. He tried to get two hours every day for actual prayer, and still was unsatisfied. You

[1] *Christian Doctrine.*

must read the book when I come home. He said one striking thing:—"I can do more by praying than I can do in any other way."

To Mr. E. A. Lawrence

Llanbedr, 16*th August* 1894.

It was very good of you to send me so full an account of the Summer School;[1] I read it with great interest. I had already been struck by the inconsiderable number of English Congregational ministers whose names were registered. Norman Smith had sent me the list, and there were hardly any whom I knew. It is curious; I wonder how it is. Do our men care for Theology? Do they get their sermons, as one conspicuous man recently informed the public he did, from novels rather than from the Bible? I hear very discouraging things sometimes—things showing the most melancholy indifference, on the part of very good men, to exegesis and to the whole range of theological inquiry. I am afraid that I am apt to drift towards what you say is ——'s mind, minus the feeling that there is an Elijah at Horeb. But I fight against it. The newspapers and the Congregational Union discussions probably show us at our worst.

To Mrs. Richard Davies

22*nd August* 1894.

I cannot tell you how grateful I am for all your kindness, or what happiness it was to me to see Treborth again—by which I do not mean Treborth so much, as the people who are there; though Treborth itself is beautiful. It was a delightful surprise to find Mr. Davies so well, and your own vigour so wonderful. You must not be surprised if you have more than your own share in bearing the burdens of others; that seems to be the reason that God gives some people strength. What a mystery life is! We may, I think, listen to God saying to us every day, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know afterwards." The most gracious of the Divine acts are sometimes concealed under what seems to us the roughest circumstances; and His grace is working both in ourselves and others when we can hardly see the faintest signs of it. But it is hard to walk by faith.

If I can lay my hands on a copy of my lectures on the

[1] The "Summer School" of Theology carried on in connection with Mansfield College, Oxford.

Ephesians this afternoon I shall take the liberty of sending it to you. It is the book of mine that I like best; Paul found me the material, and I had nothing to do but to say over again what he had already said. I was looking at it this morning, and found that twelve years ago I had seen something which I thought I had seen for the first time during my recent stay at Llanbedr: but I doubt whether I saw it clearly twelve years ago; Paul had seen it, and I only repeated it after him. I am referring to that pregnant phrase—"according to the good pleasure of His will," which Paul uses in connection with God's pre-ordaining us to the adoption of sons. It is full of consolation and strength.

To Mrs. Richard Davies

11th September 1894.

Mrs. Dale tells me that your birthday will be on Thursday; allow me to offer my affectionate congratulations, and to express the earnest hope that you have still many vigorous and happy years before you.

You will think of all the goodness and grace that God has shown you, and of all the reasons you have for being thankful that you were born at all, and have been kept in life till now. You will think of the divine air that you must have breathed in your home, of all that I know you must have become to your father and mother—what joy and strength and light you gave them. You will think of all that you have been to Mr. Davies and to your children. You will think of what you have been to friends, many of whom have gone to their rest. And yet you cannot know what you have been to others—how much solace and courage and hope a warm and generous heart like yours is constantly giving to others. Be assured, my dear friend, you have been a blessing to others far beyond your thoughts. I suppose that we often confer the best blessings when we are not thinking of doing any service either to God or man. Of course you have your unfulfilled hopes; that is the lot of every child of God until the final home is reached. But we have to learn to lose our own care in the larger, deeper, mightier care of God; we have to think—shall I say?—not of how much we need God's sympathy, but of how much He needs ours. I do not cease to pray that all your young people—in whom there is so much to love and admire—may learn the true secret of this blessed life.

Mrs. Dale and I are venturing to send you Moule on the Romans. I am reading it with great interest and, I trust, with profit. I do not always agree with him; but he has a deep knowledge of the things of Christ, and there is something con-

tagious in his earnestness. His theology will, I suppose, recall to you the theology of your own earlier years.

To Miss A. M. Davies

Malvern, *8th October* 1894.

It was more than good of you to write to me, and your letter brought warmth and light. I should have answered it long ago but I have had rather a bad time. There has been a striking originality about me during the last six weeks. At Treborth, as you know, I started asthma. After I got home my eyes troubled me for the first time in my life. For several days I was unable to write more than a few lines at a time; and I was wearied after reading for three or four minutes. It was a curious experience to be able neither to read nor write. But life was not so dull as you might imagine it would be. For years I have been in the habit, at quiet times, of thinking about my friends, brooding over them, as one broods over striking lines in a poem; and I found that this was a very happy way of passing the time. And then I thought about great Christian experiences and tried to translate them into approximately accurate intellectual forms—into definition and doctrine. This is always a delight. The intellectual interest of the Christian gospel and of the life it creates remains eternally fresh. Indeed I have sometimes feared that I find the mere intellectual interest of Christian truth too absorbing and stimulating. . . .

You are only partly right in saying that we can do so little for those we love: my experience is that the affection of my friends is bread for strength and wine for joy; the things it cannot do may with God's good help be endured.

The last link with the outside world was severed during the summer, when he resigned his Chairmanship of the Council and of the Board of Education of Mansfield College. For some time previously he had been unable to discharge his official duties, but his colleagues had induced him to remain; now he insisted that a successor should be appointed. In the winter, Mr. Barber, his assistant, left Carr's Lane, having accepted a pastorate at Bolton. Dale felt the parting keenly. The personal relations between them had been so close; Mr. Barber had served the church so well; his temperament was so full of warmth and light, that the separation, though in-

evitable, was a real sorrow, and it was with regret as well as anxiety that Dale began to search for a successor to the vacant place.

About the same time, in a season of great depression, when the sense of weakness had well-nigh mastered him, and his work, as he looked back on it, filled him with self-reproach, he received unexpected encouragement. The Congregational Union, assembled at Liverpool, passed a resolution expressing their affectionate sympathy with him in his retirement, their gratitude for his past services, and their cordial appreciation of the work that he was still able to do through his books. His friends—as Dr. Guinness Rogers said in moving the resolution—wished "to send a bright moment to him in this hour of weakness"; and their purpose was abundantly fulfilled. The affection of his brethren had never been so precious, and the telegram in which the vote of the assembly was communicated stirred him deeply. Only a few days later, before the first impression had time to fade, came a letter from the Bishop of Durham bringing fresh assurance that he had not laboured in vain, and referring especially to the Lectures on the Ephesians. "I am not a patient reader of commentaries," he wrote, "but your lectures give me better than anything else the help which I welcome." The whole letter was full of affectionate regard. No other living man could have so cheered him. For Dr. Westcott, though they seldom met, he had the most profound admiration, and a reverence that learning by itself can never command. The assurance that it had been granted him in any degree to minister to the strength of such a spirit filled him with inexpressible joy. And as if to crown his gladness, the same week brought an unlooked-for blessing in the innermost circle of the home. His heart was full to overflowing, and the brightness of "the great week," as he called it, remained with him to the end.

The end was nearer than he thought. The new year, 1895, had set in brightly. His book on *Christian Doctrine* had met with a welcome far exceeding his expectation. His hope had been that it would slowly make its way among Aged 65.

the few who cared for such subjects; on immediate success he had not ventured to reckon; and the generous appreciation with which the volume was at once received, even by those who in theological thought stood farthest from him, gave him fresh courage and confidence. The letter that he received from the Bishop of Winchester—a most friendly and genial correspondent—was one of many such that came to him.

FROM THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER[1]

FARNHAM CASTLE, SURREY, *7th December* 1894.

I cannot lay down your book on *Christian Doctrine* without thanking you for the solid and exhilarating instruction it has given me, and for the contribution which it represents, with so much lucidity and force and erudition, to the maintenance of the common faith.

If there is one passage in it which exceptionally commends itself to my judgment for diction and a certain majestic loftiness of idea it is in page 155, where you ask, For what does the word "God" stand? I doubt if there is another man living who could have written the passage that follows—not many dead.[2]

If we were sitting near to each other by the fire I could say a great deal—all in a happy and admiring concord. I quite feel with you that the sense of sin is comparatively little felt, and perhaps less dwelt on by Christian teachers now than of old. We learn it in old age, if not sooner; and there is a gulf of difference between repentance and penitence. I am not sure if Evangelical teaching—which however among thoughtful men, not cankered by party spirit, is filling out and completing itself on all sides—does not need to grow in its recognition and appreciation of the objective side of truth. In your next volume I shall eagerly look for your teaching on the Sacraments. To ignore or minimise divinely-ordained methods of grace is to play into the hands of the enemy.

Your book will now take its place with many others from the same honoured pen, in a bookcase just under a portrait of Bishop Andrewes.

[1] Dr. Thorold.

[2] The passage to which the Bishop refers is in the lecture on the Trinity: *Christian Doctrine*, pp. 155, 156.

For whom does the word "God" stand? It stands for One of whose greatness it seems presumptuous to speak, and in whose presence silence seems the truest worship. He lives from Eternity to Eternity. He is here;

He looked forward to completing his original plan with a second series of similar discourses. He also began to prepare for writing a book on the Holy Spirit, which had been in his mind for many years. He had touched upon the subject at many points; but hitherto in attempting to bring his thought into system, he had found himself confronted by an obstacle that he could not surmount. It was the one book that he longed to write; and now the path, he hoped, might open before him.

As he looked back, it appeared that the attacks of illness had gradually diminished in severity. In 1891 he had been absent from his pulpit for twenty-one Sundays in succession; in 1892 for nineteen; in 1893 for ten. But during the past twelvemonth his longest absence through illness had not extended beyond three Sundays; and on 12th February when he recalled these details in

He is everywhere; there is no remotest region where He is not. To say that He created all things, and that, after sustaining all things through countless ages, He fainteth not, neither is He weary, is to say nothing concerning His infinite strength: He Himself is infinitely greater than the universe, and He lives, has ever lived, and will live for ever, in the power of His own life. We say—and yet we know not what we are saying—that all things in this world and in all worlds, are present to His mind; in this world—every grain of sand on the desolate shores of unknown seas, every ripple that breaks the surface of quiet inland streams, every wave that foams in mid-ocean; the flutter of every leaf in a thousand forests; the birth and the death of every wild flower; every drop of dew that glitters in the morning sun; the song of every bird; the joy and the pain of every living thing;—every word that is spoken, every deed that is done, by all the millions of the human race; every settled purpose, every transient thought, every vague longing, every passion, every memory, every hope, of every man in all countries and in all times. We say that all things are present to His mind—all things in the heavens above as well as on the earth beneath: and then,—if the countless worlds which relieve the solitudes of the infinite realms of space are filled, as well they may be, with countless races of living creatures having other joys and sorrows than ours, other forms of intellectual faculty, other temptations to sin, other possibilities of virtue,—their innumerable and various lives with all the shadows that darken, and all the lights that brighten them, are always present to Him.

He Himself is removed by an infinite distance from all the fluctuations and vicissitudes of created life. His blessedness is unclouded, His peace unbroken, by the storms that beat upon the universe, which is infinitely beneath Him. His righteousness can be assailed by no temptations. The Law of Righteousness itself, though not the creature of His will, is not above Him. In His supremacy the law is supreme; He does not obey it. In Him and through Him it exerts its august authority. He dwells in light that no man can approach unto. Clouds and darkness are round Him. God is great, and we know Him not.

writing his yearly preface to the Carr's Lane Church Manual, he had been well enough to preach for twelve Sundays out of thirteen, and on Christmas Day also. But the winter had been severe, and the protracted cold was against him. On 18th January he had been laid aside, and, to his bitter disappointment, he could not attend the reception given to Dr. Guinness Rogers in Birmingham on the 24th. He was looking forward, he said, with much uncertainty to the next three or four weeks.

He knew well that his hold on life was feeble and precarious, but the letters written during these weeks, and the address on "Friendship" that he gave to his church on Christmas Day, showed that his interests, his sympathies, and his affections were as strong as ever.

To the Rev. Dr. Reynolds

26th November 1894.

I see that the Lord Jesus Christ has called you away from your Cheshunt work to rest awhile.[1] I hope that it will not be in a "desert place," but if it is, He will be with you; and then sooner or later will come the free and vigorous life and the larger service in the presence of His glory.

What solace and strength there is in a time like this in remembering His great power and His perfect love for you! To your friends there is also solace in thinking of all that the grace of God has been accomplishing through you for many years. You may not find in this all the solace that they find; but the solace will come to you. I suppose that even you may feel that you have fallen far short of the faithfulness which the infinite love of Christ should have created in you; but is there not a kind of satisfaction in thinking that we have had no part in the good work that God has done through us; that He has done it notwithstanding our want of fidelity; that His grace has been shown as abundantly in the good that He has done through us as in the forgiveness of our sins? I have been walking in paths that have brought me to this. You, too, if you have times when the failures of the past seem terrible to you, may come to it.

But to your brethren your life and work are full of a light

[1] Dr. Reynolds had just resigned the Presidency of Cheshunt College.

from Heaven, and they bless God for what you have been to them. They love you because they have found Christ in you. I trust that you are not destined to suffer severe pain or even that permanent weakness and prostration which sometimes seem to me worse than pain. Nor must you think that your service to Christ and us is over. You may sit quietly on the shore—perhaps for years—looking across to the land on the other side shining in the Eternal light; and you will tell us what you see.

You know—no, you do not know—how much we love you. The discovery of that will be one of the blessed surprises of the great future. But we do love you and we pray that you may have peace.

To Mrs. Richard Davies

11th December 1894.

I assure you that I was never more serious in my life than when I said that I hoped that the Discourses on Christian Doctrine would meet with your approval as far as the substance of them is concerned. For it is a fundamental principle with me that Christian people who, like yourself, have known Christ for a long time, and who have been under such influences as those which rested on you during your father's life, realise for themselves such great facts as those with which I deal in this volume; and if I found that my statements on these central glories of the Faith did not satisfy them, I should be troubled. If I gave an account of Menai Straits which seemed to you on any important point inaccurate I should know that I was wrong; for you have *lived* there; and you have lived in those high realms with which the discourses deal. About the *Notes* I do not feel quite the same. For in them I had to deal with questions which are raised by speculation, and about which there must for a long time to come be differences among Christian people.

The book is making its way fairly, and is getting more commendation than it deserves. The *Tablet*—the chief Roman Catholic newspaper, had a long and cordial review of it a week or two ago. Of course it cannot recommend Roman Catholic laymen to read a theological book by a Congregationalist; but it thinks that priests who will know how to supply its defects might read it with profit.

I wonder when your young people will land. I have thought of them every day since they started. God grant that they may come back to you in health and safety.

To the Rev. Dr. Fairbairn

13th December 1894.

Hearty thanks for the affectionate warmth of your review of *Christian Doctrine* in the *Speaker*. Do you remember what Macaulay wrote to Henry Rogers when Rogers had spoken enthusiastically about his Speeches?—"Your kind partiality diminishes the value of your critical approbation. But I had much rather that you should like my writings for my sake than for their own." This is a wholesome check on whatever conceit might have been encouraged by your generous words, but it creates satisfaction of another and better kind.

To Miss A. M. Davies

31st December 1894.

Please always write to me when you have "nothing to say." I like letters of that sort. Other letters are apt to lose the interest of personality.

That poem of Goethe's to which you refer is charming. But I feel very unlike an eagle; indeed I never had any experience of that kind. If I wanted to find an analogue I think that the most suitable would be an old cab-horse that had never known any other life, and could not look back upon the time when, like many of his fellows, he pricked up his ears at the sound of the huntsman's horn and was fiercely happy when clearing hedges and ditches and listening to the dogs in full cry. I seem to have been nearly always in the shafts, though just now and then I have had a good time when turned out to grass.

But there was one of your letters in which you had a great deal to say and which gave me a great thrill of joy. I remember very vividly the months of happiness which I had after it was settled that I should go to the Holy Land. The thought of it was with me by day and by night; that was one of the times when I was looking forward to be turned out to grass, and the lumbering old cab at my heels rattled over the granite road as it had never done before. I share your delight. . . .

You will be glad to hear that I am still mending—in my health I mean—as to other matters, who can say? I have preached seven Sundays in succession, and I also preached on Christmas Day. I told your mother that on Christmas Day I was going to quote a sentence in which Whately says how rare it is that people after they have passed middle life make new friendships: "For grafts of old wood to take, the trees must be

very congenial." I have found that it is not impossible. On my own account I said—and I think for once I hit upon an original thought—that when friendships of a close and happy kind are formed after middle life it is usually with persons much younger than ourselves. I could have mentioned Treborth as an example of both. I gave the congregation a story of Bagehot's in illustration of the use of the term "friends" as what I called a "mere courtesy title"; I wonder whether you remember it. A week or two after Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* a French lady said to him: "Ah Monsieur! this revolution has saved the country: all my friends are in prison."

I really think I could go on writing till the New Year comes in, and as yet there are eleven hours and a half of the old year to run out—but I must stop. To you and to all of you at Treborth, I trust that the New Year will be very gracious and bountiful—kinder than all your hopes.

To Miss A. M. Davies

9th February 1895.

And you start this day week; at least I think that that was the date you gave in one of your earlier letters. You will find it, I think, a journey that will yield harvests for many years to come. I am not sure, indeed, that the new reality and substance which it will give to the visible and material environment of the greatest events in the history of our race does, in itself, very much to reveal the inner mystery and power of the events themselves. The house in which a man lives—unless he designed and built and finished it himself—does not make the real life of the man more intelligible. And even if he builds or reconstructs or adorns it, it leaves the great secret untold. Gorhambury might declare something of Bacon's love of magnificence and grandeur, but what can it show of the singular contrast in the man of intellectual grandeur and moral meanness? What light can it throw on his treachery to Essex and his subserviency to Buckingham? And the man who lived there after Bacon might have been of stainless integrity but half a fool. You get no deeper into the Sermon on the Mount by seeing the grassy slopes above Gennesaret and "the city set on a hill" to which our Lord may have pointed while He was speaking. Nor do the olive trees of the traditional Gethsemane contribute anything to illustrate the awful mystery of the Agony. But a new colour will emerge on nearly every page of the Four Gospels and on many of the pages of the Old Testament. When you read the words of the woman of Samaria—"Our fathers worshipped in

this mountain"—you will think of the hour when you sat at the well and looked up at Gerizim; and a hundred experiences of the same kind will come to you in connection with story after story, discourse after discourse. Did I tell you that in the small Bible which I carried in my hand-bag I always inserted in the margin the dates at which I read passages connected with particular places that I visited—*e.g.* in the margin of John xi.—*Bethany*—such and such a date? It was a pleasant record.

But if, without any attempt to force deeper thinking, and without any dream of God's being nearer to one in Jerusalem or on the path over the Mount of Olives by which our Lord must often have gone to Bethany, the mind and heart are open to the power of the great memories of the country, I think that by God's grace much may come to one unsought that will be an everlasting possession. Now and then, indeed, it is natural to make a deliberate attempt to take hold of the inner reality of the events which took place at the spots one is visiting. I hope that your friends have that great and most desirable quality in travelling companions—the disposition and the power to be silent at times. When riding it is delightful to be able to brood for an hour over some fact and its meaning, and, if you could but smoke, you would find it wonderful to sit outside your tent in the evening and brood again. But if those young ladies chatter continually you will have to ask Gabriel to wring their little necks.

God be with you, and give you, as you can bear it, a strong and full sense of His presence! Take it for granted that as you travel He will be seeking you—that you will not merely have to seek Him. You may miss each other for a time (that's an anthropomorphic way of speaking, but anthropomorphic ways of speaking of God are the truest), but you will find each other before long, and perhaps—in a double sense—in unlikely places. He does not give you this time of release from your common life for nothing. And may He keep you and your friends in health and safety and peace. Every day that you are away I shall ask Him to do it.

TO MRS. RICHARD DAVIES

9th January 1895.

I trust that the New Year has begun with you in brightness and joy, and that it will become brighter as it goes on. We can never tell what blessed surprises are near to us. When, as the Collect says, we love what God commands and desire what He has

promised, it is certain that all things will go well with us. With me, apart from the anxiety which it is hardly possible to avoid, arising from the prospect of losing my assistant and having to find another, the year is beginning very happily. There is happiness at home and happiness in the church, and God has been enabling me to realise with new vividness and joy some of the great blessings of His grace, especially what it is to have risen and ascended with Christ. My people, too—many of them at least—seem to have been drawn towards that great blessedness, and to desire to know by experience what it is. It is wonderful how the congregation holds together; it has been a constant surprise to me for many years, and year after year I have asked myself, How long will it last? I have been able to preach on eight successive Sundays besides Christmas Day, and I think that I am getting stronger. But I suppose that I still need to be reminded how uncertain the continuance of my strength is, and now and then there comes a gentle touch from an unseen hand to remind me of it. I tell you about my own affairs, because I like you to tell me about yours.

TO THE VERY REV. DR. PAGET[1]

9th January 1895.

Accept my warmest thanks for the copy of your *Studies in Christian Character*, which reached me this morning, and especially for its kindly inscription.

As yet I have not read beyond the Introductory Essay, which has interested me deeply. Your other books belong to the kind—not too numerous—which one reserves for those times when one can brood over the deeper facts of human life and the central, the innermost, relations of God to all that we are and all that through His grace we are destined to be; and I want to keep this volume for the same uses to which its predecessors have ministered.

I am glad to have this opportunity of thanking you, which I trust that I may do without presumption, for your sketch of the late Dean of St. Paul's. You have succeeded in giving it the atmosphere—as of another and higher world—which one is conscious of breathing when reading some of his writings, and of which those who were so happy as to know him must have been still more conscious in their personal intercourse with him. And you have maintained the reserve which he himself would have maintained in speaking of one whom he greatly loved and honoured.

[1] Dean of Christ Church.

To have said about him all that one feels you might have said, would have been to say less.

The renewal of strength which had gladdened him proved fictitious. He preached on 10th February—for the last time. Towards the end of the week he became unwell. Weakness grew rapidly; he could not sleep; he suffered severely from physical and mental distress. Dr. Saundby, who was called in, and his own doctor, Mr. Vickers Whitby, who throughout his illness had attended him with unremitting care, could do nothing but relieve his pain. And so day after day the weary struggle continued. For hours together his mind wandered in darkness. When himself, though fully aware of his danger, he did not give up hope. He would like, he said, if it were God's will, to have a few years' more work for Carr's Lane, and to write one more book. When asked, "Do you not feel the mystery of death?" he replied, "No, not the mystery of death, but the mystery of pain." On Saturday 9th March, Sir Walter Foster, an old friend and neighbour, came as a last resource. He at once saw that nothing could be done, but his visit and the memories that it recalled brought a passing gleam of brightness. The shadow soon closed in again, and on the Wednesday evening, 13th March, after an unavailing effort to rally, the end came and the sufferer was at rest.

On his study desk lay a sheet of an unfinished sermon, with its last sentence—the last words that he wrote—broken off in the middle. It states the law by which his life had been ruled; it suggests, in its incompleteness, the mystery of the great hope into which he had entered.

"Unworldliness" does not consist in the most rigid and conscientious observance of any external rules of conduct, but in the spirit and temper, and in the habit of living, created by the vision of God, by constant fellowship with Him, by a personal and vivid experience of the greatness of the Christian redemption, by the settled purpose to do the will of God always, in all things, at all costs, and by the power of the great hope—the full assurance—that, after our mortal years are spent, there is a larger, fuller, richer life in——.

Memorial services were held on the following Sunday. Dr. Fairbairn preached in the morning, and Dr. Guinness Rogers at night. In all parts of the country, and by men of all churches, reference was made to the loss that had befallen Christian faith and Christian thought. Distinctions of creed were forgotten in the presence of a common sorrow. By none was a fuller or a more generous tribute paid to the life and work of the dead than by Archdeacon Sinclair in St. Paul's and by Canon Gore in Westminster Abbey.

The funeral took place the next day. To dwell on its details would be fruitless—save in so far as the sorrow of the living attests the worth of the dead. It was a solemn mourning, but the dominant note was one of triumph. It was not with dirges that God's servant was carried to the tomb; not with tears only, but with thanksgiving for the long life of service that had reached its earthly close. Death was swallowed up in victory.

To some the sight of the coffin as it lay beneath the pulpit at Carr's Lane recalled the words, already quoted, in which Mr. James addressed his young colleague at his ordination more than forty years before: "Rich in years, in honours, and in usefulness, may you come at some far distant day to your end: and then, after labouring in the same pulpit, come and lie down with me in the same grave at the foot of it: so shall we resemble warriors resting on the field where they fought and conquered."[1] The old man's prayer had been more than fulfilled, even though they might not share one grave.

As the long procession made its way through the crowds that lined the streets to the cemetery on Key's Hill, the city seemed to have ceased from its activity and to have gathered to render the last tribute to the minister and the citizen. No such concourse had been seen for many years, and it had gathered not in curiosity but in reverence. Above, on the sandstone cliff in which the cemetery is quarried, on the long platform of the railway station close by, and on the station roof itself, men and

[1] p. 97.

women stood in serried lines, and from beyond the walls came the faint murmur of unseen thousands outside. But within the cemetery all was stillness and peace. The afternoon was warm and bright. Spring had come in its beauty, with its parable and promise of resurrection. Sunlight flooded the sombre spot with a divine glory; the pall of smoke had given place to a cloudless blue.

The service at the grave-side was simple and brief. When the coffin had been lowered to its resting-place with the words of hope and trust—"We commit his body to the grave, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection"—Dr. Fairbairn offered a short prayer:—"Now, as we depart our several ways into the world and its life, may the memory of the sainted dead be a memory that blesseth and abideth with us." The benediction followed; then the silence.

He is not without a memorial in the city that he loved so long and so well. His statue in the Art Gallery—the work of Mr. Onslow Ford—shows him as he was, not in the pulpit or on the platform, with the vehemence and passion of the orator, but in those hours of quietness when, apart from the conflict and turmoil of the world, he dwelt in those high and sacred regions where the springs of the inner life take their rise. And he has another memorial, nobler and imperishable—one that even the genius of the sculptor cannot match—in the abiding strength of the great church to which he ministered for more than forty years, and which, under a new leader and with increasing power, is still unwearied in service and still loyal to the Faith.

CHAPTER XXVII

DALE AS A THEOLOGIAN

By Principal Fairbairn, D.D.

It will be admitted without question that Dale occupied an influential and distinctive position among the theologians of the second half of our century. Men who differed from him profoundly on questions of ecclesiastical polity gratefully recognised his eminence as a divine. The men who agreed with him in his theory of the Church confessed that it was mainly by his massive thought that he had moulded or guided their minds. His theological work had the rare note of integrity and reality. It was his own; won by the sweat of his own brain; interpreted for him by the experiences of his own life. His manhood was rooted in it; and in it he had articulated the convictions by which he lived. He was a theologian by intellectual necessity, for his was a nature to which thought was native. No man ever had less of the mere rationalist in him; yet his faith, however penetrated by emotion and transfigured by imagination, had been passed through the fire of an intellect that was not so much critical as synthetic. But into the synthesis no element was allowed to enter that he had not rationally tested and that he could not logically justify. He was anything but a schoolman. Technical precision he neither loved nor coveted, and where it became scholasticism he even cordially despised it. This means that the form of his thought as well as its substance was his own, made by himself for the expression of his own mind. What he

believed he preached, and his beliefs were those of a man who, while he stood rooted in the past, lived in the present, feeling in his thoughtful life the modifying influences of the various forces he was yet helping to modify.

There are two ways in which Dale's work as a theologian may be presented—the chronological and the logical. Were we to adopt the former we should have, first, to enumerate his several works in the order of their appearance, and, next, to analyse and expound their contents in the light of their occasion, their purpose and their scope. But this would be to intrude into the province of the biographer, and the biographer has done it in a way which admits neither of correction nor of supplement. And so it will be more agreeable to the purpose of this chapter to follow the logical method, and attempt to make his position as a theologian clear and intelligible. It is the more necessary to take this line as his theology is nowhere systematically developed, but is embedded in the many books which came from his pen.

One of the remarkable features both of the man and the theology is that it was not written by a cloistered student for students, but by a man who lived much in the public eye and who was accustomed to address large and mixed congregations. And so his thought took shape in the spoken discourse, but then it was discourse that recalled the heroic age of the English sermon. His words though written to be spoken are even more fitted to be read than to be heard, for his books are as firm in texture, as weighty in matter, as vigorous in expression as the concentrated thought of a strong man could make them. But while he did not, with all the apparatus of logical exactitude and completeness, attempt to deliver his whole mind in any single work, he was too clear, too independent and too resolute a thinker ever to leave us in any doubt as to what he meant or what he believed. The form in which he delivered his theology is all the more significant of the man that it was so directly addressed to the living and, as it were, unadulterated mind. There was nothing that he so much loved to do as to test the reality

of his beliefs by their applicability to life, their power to change, to possess, and to command the souls of men.

Before attempting to estimate Dale's place and work as a theologian, we must endeavour to set him and his theology in their proper historical relations.

The middle decades of the century were the period of his formation. From 1840 to 1850 he was a youth, eager, earnest, active in mind, with a strong didactic vein in him, anxious to know, resolute to teach. The intensity of the didactic passion gives to his earliest utterances a stamp of maturity rather than prematurity, for his moral gravity was too native to allow us to conceive him as even then juvenile. From 1850 to 1860 he was, first, the student at Spring Hill feeling his way into a reasoned faith, and, next, the colleague and successor of the grave yet kindly John Angell James, then minister of Carr's Lane, who had, within the progressive liberalism of the youth whose career he had so judiciously yet so intelligently watched, discerned the promise and the conservative power of a positive and of a stalwart mind. In those years we see Dale looking eagerly out on the world in which he was to work, trying and disciplining his strength, acquiring knowledge and essaying the methods by which it could best be translated into action, learning, in a word, how to walk alone and how to become a leader of those who were waiting for a guide.

And what was the then state of religious thought in England? The air was thick and hot with controversies in which the controversialists felt and spoke strongly, but hardly understood either themselves or their opponents or the questions over which they so fiercely contended. In the earlier of the two decades the Tractarians had been worsted in Oxford, but had carried their appeal to the country, and under a changed name and most unacademic conditions were strenuously seeking to achieve the Anglican Revival. The causes which moved Newman, affected in a very different way the society and circle within which Dale moved. The "Liberalism" which the Anglican feared, the Dissenter loved; while to the one it seemed

to threaten religious extinction, to the other it promised religious emancipation. The long maintained disabilities of Nonconformists had produced among them a double intellectual tendency—the tendency to claim for themselves full and equal rights as citizens,—which meant emancipation from the disqualifications that hindered their service of the State and the city; and the tendency so to define and limit the spheres of Church and State as to secure the independence of the Church from the control of the civil power. The political changes which Liberalism had effected meant that the opportunity of the Dissenter had come, and that he could, on the one hand, do something to secure the embodiment of his ideas in civil legislation; and, on the other, make his ideal of the Church active and efficient as it had never before been within the English State. These changes involved, in other words, both a civil and a religious result, viz. (*a*) the removal of those privileges which had marked and guaranteed the ascendency of the Established Church; and (*b*) the making of the Church, as the collective religious society which included all churches, potent in the State in the very degree that it was free from the State. For the Dissenter believed in freedom, and thought that through it the Church as the interpreter of the ethical ideals of religion would become all the more capable of being the social conscience, at once individual and common, imperious and sensitive. But while their attitude to Liberalism was thus different, there was, in one respect, complete agreement between the Anglican and the Dissenter. They differed, radically, as to what the Church was; but they alike believed in its rights as a divine community, and in its duties as a society charged with the saving of the world. These affinities were often concealed by the heat and fury of the battle, but all the same they were there, working in the hearts of both like a leaven.

Of course in theology proper the antagonism was more direct and more complete. Newman's attitude on Justification by Faith, on the sources and bases of

authority in religion, on the agencies and channels of grace, was the direct opposite of Dale's. And the intellectual influence which in his student days affected him most powerfully was that of Henry Rogers, who was, in an equal degree, the opponent of the catholicism which John Henry Newman represented, and of the rationalism which had found its most gifted spokesman in his brother Francis. Dale's opinions as to the Tractarian Movement thus took shape while it was in its most truculent, ill-informed, and polemical phase. He remembered it as it ran amuck at the most cherished traditions, the most characteristic beliefs, the most honoured personalities of the older evangelical theology. The men he had been trained to honour as saints were to the Tractarians pestiferous heretics or wilful schismatics; and the truths that were to him the very Gospel of God were to them the last refuges of error. But it ought to be here said, that as the movement grew wiser and more distinctly religious, his appreciation of what was good in it became clear and impressive. I well remember how earnestly he once said to me, when we had been speaking concerning the early volumes of Pusey's *Life*, "The blessing of God was in it, though we did not see it, and in a form they did not understand; in the lives and in the devotion of these men a new endowment of the Holy Spirit came into the life of England." This was said even though his judgment as to the theological principles and the ecclesiastical claims of the Tractarians had become only the more clearly and deliberately adverse.

But other and more potent theological influences came to Dale, as it were, by inheritance. This inheritance was represented by the Puritan theology as modified by the Evangelical Revival; and as defined in the period before the Revival by the conflict with the Arminian system, and in the period which followed it by the conflict with the Socinian. The Puritan theology had been from the first a rigorous and closely knit system. It had been built on the sovereignty of God, the sufficiency of Divine Grace, and the necessity of the Atonement as the means by

which Grace could be effectually realised while Divine Justice was satisfied. The almighty and gracious Will of God acted upon the sinful mass of mankind, was the sole cause of any good at work within it, and decreed at once the method of Redemption and the number of the redeemed. All its doctrines—the Incarnation, Election, Justification, Atonement—came from this fundamental position; and so long as it was a question of mere logic arguing from the premisses supplied by an absolute Sovereignty, the system had little to fear. The Arminian or Remonstrant theology of the seventeenth century was a protest against the Calvinistic idea of God in the form of a free and individualistic conception of man; human freedom was made to condition the acts of the Divine Will; the rights of the creature set a limit to the absolute power of the Creator. But the Arminian system, from the very necessity of its premiss, was strong in what it affirmed as to men and denied as to God, and its denial was so conditioned by the emphasis it laid on its primary affirmations—*i.e.* the integrity of the human reason and the freedom of the human will—as to produce a critical rationalism which was as shallow in religion as it was potent in logic. Still, in spite of these defects, it laid stress on Redemption or the means for the reconciliation of God and man, and was able, from its freer spirit and less conservative standpoint, to make both in exegesis and in theology certain remarkable contributions to the exposition and vindication of what were known as the Doctrines of Grace. These, indeed, were largely neutralised by the comparative sterility of the Remonstrants in the field of piety or practical life; while the power of the theology they opposed was seen in the intensity it created in the region of spiritual experience and devotion. The Arminian and Calvinistic systems thus faced each other, not only as antithetical theologies, but as opposed types of religion; the one marked by the eminence it gave to man, upholding his dignity even before the majesty of God; the other by the submission it claimed from man, affirming the supremacy of the

Divine Will over the whole conscience and the whole of life.

But the Evangelical Revival in the second half of the eighteenth century, and the earlier years of the nineteenth, introduced a change in the relation of these ancient enemies. For the first time Arminians and Calvinists were exhibited in a new religious relation which powerfully affected their intellectual differences. Wesley was a vehement Arminian, but the religious value of his work could not be denied. The Nonconformists who maintained the Puritan tradition long regarded him with doubt, and even with jealousy and suspicion. They disliked his doctrine of Free Will, the insistence with which he preached the possibility of an immediate conversion, the excitement which his preaching created, the energy with which he enlisted as preachers the men whose only claim to be heard was the completeness with which they had changed from the old life to the new. But though the historical Nonconformists disliked the new movement, its fervour and its piety were stronger than their aversion. It is true that Whitefield, Toplady, and many another son of the Evangelical Revival, remained as strenuous Calvinists as ever; but it is no less true that the most marvellous effects were created by Wesley, and the influence exercised by him was the more far-reaching and revolutionary. The Revival in penetrating the older Orthodox Nonconformity powerfully affected its theology; and made it feel that a system that laid so much stress on the conditionality of salvation, the freedom of the will, and the universality of Grace, could yet create an intenser and more expansive religious life than for generations it had known within its own borders. Hence came a modified theological attitude; for where the practical antithesis ceased, the intellectual could not be maintained as sharply as before.

And now another force came to complete the change and carry onward the modification of theological opinion. The growth first of Arian and then of Socinian views is one of the most remarkable features in the theological

thought of the eighteenth century. It was in the earlier decades very potent in the Established Church, but in the later it took definite denominational shape within the churches of the Presbyterian order. The tendencies which had made the Arians turn Socinian were those which found their ultimate logical expression in the current Deism which so conceived God and Man as to find the perfection of each in his independence of the other. Its watchword was thus the sufficiency of man as a moral being; his ability to obey the law he carried in his own bosom, and thus to realise the end of his existence. Hence the prevailing temper easily took offence at the idea of Divine intervention on man's behalf, and so its natural effect was to direct criticism more to the doctrines of Grace than to the higher and abstruser theology concerned with the Godhead and the Incarnation. For the Evangelical Revival had thrown into the foreground the dogmas of Justification and Atonement; and the ideas which were used to elucidate and justify them—Imputation, Satisfaction, Propitiation, Substitution, Justice, public, commutative, commercial, retributive, and vindictive—were the very points which lay most open to vigorous and derisive assault. And so these were the points subjected to the severest handling; their sources were declared to be heathen rather than Christian, and Scripture—especially the New Testament—was examined, retranslated, and expounded in the interests of this destructive criticism. The result was a vehement controversy which had not quite spent itself even in the days when Dale became a student. It is a note distinctive of the period that the ideas of Atonement which were assumed on the Evangelical side in order to meet the Socinian attack were drawn from an Arminian rather than a Calvinistic source,—from Hugo Grotius rather than Turretine. They began with Andrew Fuller among the Baptists, whose comparison of the Calvinistic and Socinian systems formulated the change; and with Edward Williams among the Congregationalists,[1] who based his theory on a doctrine of a limited

[1] *The Evangelical Revival*, p. 21.

or forensic sovereignty; and they were expounded and fortified by writers of a highly scholastic but often very liberal spirit—men like Pye Smith, Josiah Gilbert, and Ralph Wardlaw.

Their distinctive position may be described as an attempt to reconcile a universal Atonement with a particular Salvation through a theory of Public Justice or qualified Satisfaction. They distinguished between God and Law, a private person and a public personage. God was not only essentially Father, but He was also officially Sovereign, Rector, Judge; and whatever He might have been willing to do in His paternal character—which might be conceived as personal or private—He could, in his legal or rectorial—which was social, political, or official—deal with man only on terms agreeable to His public function. From this point of view, to forgive sin unconditionally was impossible to Him. He was, as it were, the impersonation of law; and where there had been offence, law from its very nature required satisfaction. Satisfaction was of various kinds, corresponding to the idea of Justice; vindictive or retributive justice could be satisfied with nothing less than the punishment, to the full measure of his deserts, of the offender himself; distributive justice sought out the offender and apportioned the blame; commutative justice was more or less a justice which accepted in lieu of penalty something which the offender could give or obtain; public justice was justice which simply regarded the maintenance of law, and inflicted penalty no further and in no harsher form than public safety required. If only order could be assured, and the efficiency of law vindicated, it was willing to deal gently with the offender. And it was this public justice which God enforced, and which yet enabled Him, where there was actual provision of a Substitute, at once to vindicate law and establish a ground on which the sinner could be forgiven. Of course, though the ground of forgiveness was established, the condition on which it was to be granted might still require to be fulfilled. And this was represented as Faith, which was the acceptance of

the terms on which—on the basis of Christ's Satisfaction —God could forgive Man and restore him to the society of the redeemed. The classical books of the school in which Dale was educated were full of this theory, and one of its most capable and cogent exponents was Henry Rogers.

But while Dale's mind was still in the forming, a spirit which was destined to exercise over him no little influence was being born within the bosom of this, partly, Puritan and, partly, Evangelical theology. It may be described as a spirit less legal and more personal, less concerned with the abstract ideas of law and justice, and more concerned with the concrete ideas of fatherhood and forgiveness. Its earliest exponents had been men of Presbyterian birth and creed, notably Erskine of Linlathen and Campbell of Row. They had attempted to conceive the process of reconciliation through personal relations rather than through forensic ideas; and had substituted for the right of the absolute Sovereign to do as He pleased, or the obligation of the limited Sovereign to do as law or justice required of Him, the idea of the Eternal God who did as became His inherent graciousness. But the controversy, though really occupied with a single principle, took a wide range, and concerned now the idea of forgiveness, now the extent of the Atonement, now its nature, now the idea and condition of Justification. But in all its forms it may be described as more a theology of Fatherhood than of Sovereignty. Later, the tendency was enormously increased and the principles it involved enlarged by two of the most potent English divines of our century—Frederick Denison Maurice and Frederick William Robertson of Brighton. Maurice had the more philosophical mind and translated the ideas and principles of Erskine and Campbell into what might be described as Christian Neo-Platonism. For him the great idea in theology was the Person of Christ; but that Person construed more as a transcendental idea than as a historical reality. Christ represented to him the idealism of the universe, the medium through which

man knew God, the medium through which God knew and reached man. So conceived, the Person was by its very nature and function mediatorial; but in the very degree that mediation belonged to nature, it ceased to be a matter of covenant; in the very measure that reconciliation sprang out of Person and Function, it ceased to be the product of economy and arrangement. This involved a change in the notion of sacrifice as well as in that of redemption, and before it the juridical categories in which Evangelical divines had loved to state their cardinal doctrine simply melted away. Robertson, with less speculative genius and less philosophical insight, but much more moral passion and imaginative sympathy with the difficulties and problems of the religious mind, dealt harder blows at the expediencies and substitutionary theories of the forensic scheme. The very incompleteness of his work was the secret of his power. He said what many had been feeling, but he did not help the many to translate their feelings into a rational substitute for what he so vigorously swept away. The two together raised issues which made it impossible for the Evangelical theologian to stand by his old juridical map of the universe, and to commend in the old terms the forensic scheme which he had made into the very God of God.

This was a deeper question than had been raised in the Socinian controversy. It was an assault upon the Evangelical position from within rather than from without. It did not object to the idea of Atonement as such; it proposed a new reading of the old idea because of a sweeter and worthier conception at once of Him who made it and of Him who ordained it. It was not associated with a mean and negative doctrine as to the Person of Christ; but with one that was even higher and, as it were, more absolute than that which had become traditional in Evangelical theology. There the doctrine of the work had been primary, of the Person secondary, a corollary or condition needed to secure the dignity or value or sufficiency of the work. Now the doctrine of the Person took precedence, that of the work became the corollary from

the Person; and this could not but seem to many the higher and more logical position.

These, then, were the tendencies which set the problem that Dale as a young theologian had to attempt to solve. The manner in which he faced it was characteristic, and sprang from the independence and vigour of his mind. Neander has said, *Pectus est quod facit theologum;* but it is not simply the heart, it is the whole man that makes the theologian; his theology is something to which schools and tendencies contribute less than the nature embodied in the man himself. Experience, which Dale conceived to be the wisest interpreter in theology, gives insight in proportion to the character and quality of the man whose experience it is. And Dale's nature was large and rich. He was, as we have said, strongly intellectual, with a reason that was more ratiocinative than speculative; but he was in an equal measure mystical, with the mystic's passion for union with God, and the awful sense of being too unworthy to be united with Him. And, what is a very rare thing in a man with a high mystical strain, he had a robust ethical conscience; and so the truths his reason conceived and his heart loved became laws his conscience commanded him to obey. And this meant that he never could regard a doctrine as a dogma which he was bound to believe because the Church had formulated it. Doctrine, while a factor of experience, was also verified by the experience it governed; and hence he could never feel as if a doctrine stood without or apart from him; it lived within him, represented to him the divine life, ruled over him with divine authority; through it he stood related to God, and lived under the God to whom it related him. And so he saw involved in it all his relations to life, and by its dialectical exposition all life's relations to him were unfolded.

His theological method was at once biblical and constructive. He thought himself into the mind of the sacred writers, reading their experience through his own, feeling in his own experience a verification of their mind. Of the sacred writers two—Paul and John—exercised over

him what may be described as a sovereign influence. We may at once represent and distinguish their respective influences by saying that he took his first principle from John, but he worked it into a theology by means of terms and processes he derived from Paul. Or, to use the language of his own day, we may say that he entered into the consciousness which Maurice had so voluminously expressed as to the primary place and normative influence of the Person of Christ, but he elaborated this idea in language and on lines which he owed to his Evangelical inheritance and the theology it had made.

If now we attempt to represent the action of these various forces, outer and inner, in the making of Dale's theology, we may describe it thus—he ceased to be a Calvinist without becoming an Arminian; and he so incorporated the fundamental idea or governing thought of the new liberal theology as to modify, without surrendering, the old Evangelical doctrines. This gave him in an equal measure the appearance of a polemical attitude against both the older orthodoxy and the new liberalism. In his *Discourses on Special Occasions* his criticism of certain Calvinistic doctrines was frank and severe; as for example the ideas of a limited Atonement, of innate depravity, of the natural evil which had been held to vitiate the very virtues of the unregenerate man. But he had too deep and too real a sense of sin and, as a consequence, of the need of the efficacious action of God, ever to lose hold of the more distinctive doctrines of Grace. He believed as completely as Calvin himself in the sovereignty of God, but he also believed as thoroughly as Arminius in the freedom of Man. He believed as strongly as Maurice in what may be termed the Christ immanent in man, or the creation and constitution of all things in Him; but as sincerely as the most orthodox of Evangelical theologians in the Atonement as the only ground of Man's reconciliation with God. How these ideas took shape and stood related to each other in his mind we must now attempt to show.

It became him as a son at once of Puritan theology

and of the Evangelical Revival to have a strong sense of sin. He needed to be known intimately before the degree in which he possessed it or it possessed him could be really understood; and one who only saw him on the platform or heard him only in the pulpit could never have guessed the undertone of sadness that, however subdued, made the distinctive note of his deeper life. Two great ideas filled him and were the poles between which his thought ever moved—the awful majesty and attractiveness of God and his own unworthiness of the God who so irresistibly attracted him. Sin was to him no mere mischance or accidental lapse or occasional indiscretion, but it was a malignant evil which God could not tolerate in man because it made man intolerant of God. I well remember how his feeling in this matter once found expression in one of our many conversational discussions. We had been speaking concerning the character and work of a great Anglican scholar, and I had said some severe things as to the mere love of the morbid which had often in him done duty for the sense of sin; but Dale protested that what seemed and what even might be morbid, was yet in this case not without ethical character; and that a man who knew sin might well cultivate what was to him sensuously disagreeable as a means both of mortifying the flesh and of expressing his own judgment upon himself, *i.e.* the estimate in which he thought God ought to hold him.

This feeling as to the exceeding sinfulness of sin explains the emphasis he laid on forgiveness. He could not conceive God as other than moral, and the more moral He was the more seriously would He take sin. What to himself was so darkly grave he could not imagine God putting lightly away. Sin was to him no single act; there was something permanent in it, and, so far as we were concerned, irremediable, and so he says:—

> The sins once committed remain a part of our moral history for ever. What is done cannot be undone; and the continuity of our moral life cannot be dissolved. Conscience, which is the representative of the Divine authority, the witness to the Divine

law, holds us responsible for all our sins and refuses to release us from our guilt. You may commit a sin to-morrow; it will be your sin, if you are still alive, thirty, forty, fifty years hence,—yours when you are seventy, though you committed it when you were five-and-twenty. You cannot escape from it. The malignant lie, the act of cruelty, the deliberate dishonesty will cling to you, year after year, and you will not by any moral effort be able to throw it off. . . . Conscience has no authority to pardon sin, to cancel your responsibility for it, to treat you as though you were not guilty of it.[1]

And this permanence was worked into character, and so became a thing of nature.

There are elements of good and of evil in the very life of a man. What he says and what he does disclose what he is. He is a bad man—not only because he voluntarily says and does many wicked things, but because he himself is wicked; his very life is corrupt.[2] . . . There is sin and there is righteousness in what we are, as well as in what we do.[3]

And this permanent and native sin was hereditary.

There is what may be described as a community of moral life between those who are descended from the same ancestors; for good as well as for evil they are one. And so we say that certain vices or certain virtues run in the blood of certain families. In other words, qualities—whether good or evil—which belong to the very life of a man, are derived, in part at least, from his parents; they are not wholly the result of his own volitions.[4]

And it went beyond the family, it took in the race.

There is a mysterious community of moral life between men of all countries and all ages. Individual men cannot stand absolutely alone and apart—isolated from the life of the rest of mankind. Within limits every man is morally free, but we are members one of another; and in the life which is shared by the whole race, whatever other and nobler elements there may be—and there are many—there is a power which makes for unrighteousness.

This is what theologians mean when they speak of the race

[1] *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, pp. 62-63.
[2] *Christian Doctrine*, p. 202. [3] *Ibid.* p. 203. [4] *Ibid.* p. 205.

as a fallen race. The race itself has fallen—not merely individual men; and from this fall the race needs redemption.[1]

There are times when I cannot think of the sins, even of the grossest sins, of other men, as though I were wholly free from the guilt of them; for, as I have said, we share a common life; there is a solidarity of the race in sin; and when I condemn other men, there are times when I feel that I am condemning myself; for we are all members one of another.[2]

While he so strongly stated his idea of sin, he was yet never betrayed into unguarded words as to human depravity. He had even in the earliest days of his ministry strongly censured the view of Augustine that the virtues of the heathen are splendid vices. And from this point he never departed; but the more he emphasised the guilt of sin, the more he magnified the need of forgiveness and the place it filled both in Christian experience and in Christian theology.

There was to him no miracle so remarkable as the Grace that forgave.

To those who have known the power of the Divine forgiveness to cancel the guilt of sin, the act is as clearly supernatural as any of the miracles recorded in the Gospels, and it is more wonderful, for it reveals the ascendency of the Divine Will in a region of life far nobler than that in which the physical miracles of the Gospels were wrought.[3]

And there was nothing that so filled him with alarm as the ease with which men allowed themselves to think of God as making light of sin.

For myself, I stand by the ancient faith, and believe that the indifference with which the Forgiveness of sins is regarded in these times is no evidence of the development and progress of religious thought, but a result of the decline of faith in the Living God.[4]

His conception of sin helped to determine the place and the function he assigned to the Atonement. He found it the chief article of the Creed in which he had

[1] *Christian Doctrine*, p. 213. [2] *Ibid.* p. 216.
[3] *Ephesians*, p. 66. [4] *Evangelical Revival*, p. 157.

been trained, for it had been the article of a standing or falling Church to the men of the Evangelical Revival much more exclusively than it had ever been to the Puritans. In other words, it was the sum and essence of the Evangelical as it had not been of the Puritan theology. But the place it received corresponded exactly to the function it had fulfilled in Dale's own mind and experience. Since sin was to him so exceeding sinful, he felt as if he could not dare to venture into the presence of God unless he was enriched by the merit and clothed in the Grace of his Saviour. But in his mode of conceiving the Atonement he showed how the varied elements which he had inherited had been worked into a unity that was all his own. He distinguished in a very characteristic English way the fact of the Atonement from theories concerning it. The fact was to him the relation between the death of Christ and the forgiveness of sins. This relation was to him clearly stated in the New Testament, and was a fact of his own experience which appeared verified by the uniform experience of the Church. In this name forgiveness had been preached, received and enjoyed by all saints. The fact was independent of theory; men who were without a theory as to the Atonement, or as to how it made forgiveness possible, and how secured it, or who had a theory demonstrably false or grossly inadequate, had yet been as sure as the men who had formulated the worthiest and most exalted doctrine that the death of Christ was the ground of their pardon.

But though the theory was in no degree necessary to the practical enjoyment of the benefits of Christ's death, yet thought was bound to seek the reason why it became Him to die upon the Cross. The intellect therefore made theory necessary to faith, and a means of piety especially in a critical and rational age. The distinction between fact and theory may seem so obvious as to be hardly worth making, but it was a distinction which had been largely forgotten in the period just preceding Dale's. The prevailing conception of the Atonement had been practically assumed to be identical with belief in the

efficacy of the Death to secure the forgiveness of sins. Clearly to draw the distinction was thus a step towards not only truth but charity; it made room for a more reasonably tolerant attitude of mind in those things held to be fundamental in theology. But this distinction was not made in the interest of an agnosticism or in order to save the man who made it from the labour of constructive thinking; on the contrary, he proceeded to build up a theory which seemed more adequately to interpret the facts of the case. His insistence upon the fact reposed upon a philosophy which affirmed the Death to be necessary to forgiveness.

But even to speak of necessity was to be compelled to ask for its reason. Why was the death of Christ necessary to the forgiveness of sin? He began his answer by a careful analysis of the New Testament teaching on the subject, and he here showed himself a true biblical theologian. He did not, in the manner of the older dogmatic, make a collection of proof-texts, classifying them under special heads, marshalling them, as it were, in battalions and under a discipline which he himself had enforced; but he carefully took the writers in detail, and attempted to interpret their mind in its concrete expression. He followed the evolution of thought in each case from point to point, and alike in the case of Jesus and the Apostles showed that the connection between the Death and forgiveness had been uniformly affirmed. The exegesis was skilful; admirable alike for its historical sense and its dialectical power. But his evidences were collected and co-ordinated only that he might the better attempt to find the reason for the connection, the theory of the relation which had been stated so invariably. The result was the constructive doctrine of the Atonement, which may be described as his most reasoned contribution to the theology of his time. Its distinctive elements may be stated thus:—

He dispensed with the old and irrelevant distinctions in the categories of law: the distinction between natural and positive law disappears in favour of a single and

homogeneous idea—law ethical, impersonated implicitly in man, absolutely in God—the law of righteousness. The distinctions between the various kinds of justice—vindictive, distributive, retributive, commutative, public—also disappeared. The distinction between the Sovereign and the Father, between the public and the private character of God, between the person and the governor, lost its old scholastic severity, since law was conceived as identified with God, as neither above Him nor below Him, but embodied in Him, one with His exercised life and being.[1] Law thus became the nature of God in action. It was, as it were, His articulated and externalised character. Hence Dale was able to speak of God in the most concrete, ethical terms, and to transfer to Him the attributes and functions which the old theology had restricted to law. It ceased to be abstract, but the Person in whom it lived became acutely real and moral. His judgments were not simply judicial, they were personal; but the personality they expressed was the impersonated law. Hence, instead of exonerating God by charging the responsibility of punishment upon abstract law, he makes penal action in regard to sin a matter which became a Being of absolute righteousness. He could not see it without resentment. The anger of God was not only an explicable but an inevitable thing; and, since it was impossible for a concrete being to feel anger at an abstraction, resentment against sin had no sense unless it meant against the sinner. And so he boldly and in many forms stated the position:—

> Resentment against sin is an element of the very life of God. It can no more be separated from God than heat from fire.[2]
>
> A God without moral resentment against sin would be a God not worth keeping; it is also true that such a God will never long retain a place in the heart and thought of mankind.[3]
>
> Those who have made conscience the supreme authority cannot be agitated by any dread of the Divine resentment

[1] *Atonement*, p. 372 (3rd Ed.)
[2] *Evangelical Revival*, p. 159. [3] *Ibid.* p. 168.

against sin, and cannot be anxious for the Divine Forgiveness; it is the condemnation of conscience which they fear. They may appeal to God; but it is for redemption from the moral and spiritual evil which conscience condemns. Nor does the idea of Forgiveness in any form enter as a real and efficient factor into their moral life. Conscience is their ruler, not God, and conscience never forgives.[1]

This resentment meant, of course, obligation to punish. God was bound by the same indefeasible authority which compels conscience to be our judge and visit upon the sinner the penalty he deserved. But what is the function and the purpose of penalty? It cannot be remedial or reformatory, for then "the severity of punishment would have to be measured, not by the magnitude of the sin for which it is inflicted, but by the difficulty of inducing the sinner to amend."[2] And again, "Society has no right to send a man to gaol, to feed him on bread and water, and to make him pick hemp, or work the treadmill, merely because society thinks that a discipline of this kind would do him good."[3] Nor is punishment "an expedient for strengthening the authority of the law by creating a new motive for obedience."[4] The exemplary theory of penalty "originated with jurists and statesmen"; but the theory is, whether applied to Divine government or human law, fatally defective, "'The suffering of a criminal,' it has been well said, 'benefits the public because it is deserved; it is not deserved because it benefits the public.'"[5] Nor is penalty a mere expression of "personal resentment against those who have offered an insult to God's personal dignity."[6] This theory is defective because "God cannot release His creatures from the obligation to reverence and obey Him."[7]

In contradistinction to these theories punishment was held to be "pain and loss inflicted for the violation of a law."[8] "God cannot be separated, even in idea; from the Law which has been violated, and which affirms the

[1] *Evangelical Revival*, p. 164. [2] *Atonement*, p. 374.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 375. [4] *Ibid.* p. 376. [5] *Ibid.* p. 377.
[6] *Ibid.* p. 379. [7] *Ibid.* p. 381. [8] *Ibid.* p. 383.

principle that sin deserves to be punished."[1] "God would cease to be God if His Will were not a complete expression of all the contents of the Eternal Law of Righteousness."[2] But since it is the Supreme Moral Being that inflicts the penalty, the penalty must have a moral value, which is a thing infinitely higher than any mere vindication of Law, or maintenance of a legal sanction, for "Whatever moral element there is in punishment itself—as punishment—is derived from the person or power that inflicts it."[3] There is thus an immeasurably higher moral significance in punishment conceived as the "immediate or remote effect of a Divine volition" than in "the punishment inflicted by self-acting spiritual laws."[4] And so Dale argues that "the whole Law—the authority of its precepts, the justice of its penalties—must be asserted in the Divine acts, or else the Divine Will cannot be perfectly identified with the Eternal Law of Righteousness."[5]

Now the Christian Atonement was conceived as the fulfilment of this necessity to punish sin. In the Death of Christ "the penalties are not simply held back by the strong hand of infinite love." . . . "He Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, laid aside His Eternal Glory, assumed our nature, was forsaken of God, died on the cross, that the sins of men might be remitted. It belonged to Him to assert, by His own act, that suffering is the just result of sin. He asserts it, not by inflicting suffering upon the sinner, but by enduring suffering Himself."[6] But this is not all. "If God's love for His creatures invests the Divine act which punishes them with its highest moral value, the love of the Eternal Father for the Son invests with infinite moral sublimity the Divine act which surrendered Him to desertion and to death, that the justice of the penalties of sin might be affirmed before the penalties were remitted. The mysterious unity of the Father and the Son rendered it possible for God at once to endure and to inflict penal suffering, and to do both

[1] *Atonement*, p. 384. [2] *Ibid.* p. 385. [3] *Ibid.* p. 386.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 387. [5] *Ibid.* p. 391. [6] *Ibid.* p. 392.

under conditions which constitute the infliction and the endurance the grandest moment in the moral history of God." [1]

But here a new question emerged — How did it happen that He was both able to bear man's punishment and make it possible for God to forgive sin? The answer to this question carried Dale into what we may describe as the ultimate basis of his speculative thought. This concerned, not so much the relation of the natures in the historical Person of Christ as the place which His Person occupied and the functions He fulfilled in relation to God, to the universe as a whole, and to man in particular. It was here that the newer theology exercised over him its most potently modifying influence. He conceived the Son as in all things the Supreme Mediator. God saw the universe in Him; in Him the universe saw God. They met, therefore, each looking, as it were, at the opposite side of the shield; in Him the universe was objectively realised to the Father; in Him the Father was objectively manifested to the universe. The thought that was here determinative was Johannine: Christ was the Logos, the Creator of all things, the Light of the World, the Life of the World; in Paul's phrase, "He was the image of the invisible God," the constitutive idea and constituent Will of creation. In Him all things stood together. Since the Son was in the eye of the Father identified with the creation and in the eye of man with God, the Incarnation was only, as it were, the visible form under which this identity was expressed. He was to the Father man without ceasing to be God; He was to us God without ceasing to be man. He summed up in Himself all things, both created and uncreated; He carried all things in His mind and in His heart. This ideal relation on His side had its counterpart on man's. The more the Apostles entered into the spirit of Christ, the better they knew what it was to live unto Him, and to have Him for their Lord. Because of this mystical union of Christ with man, He became in a sense collective mankind: His act

[1] *Atonement*, p. 393.

had a universal significance; what He did, man did; His own soul was so fused with man's, that He suffered for man's sin, tasted its last penalty by feeling in the very bitterness of death forsaken of God. But because of their mystical union with Christ men had a correlative experience, found themselves through Him made sons of God, taken up into His spirit, filled with His life, born into the Eternal and possessed of Eternity. This inter-relation —the Godward and the manward—explained how it was possible for Christ to feel as if He were collective man before God, and how it was possible for God to see collective man in Him; but it also explained how man could see in His sufferings the judgment upon his sin. And so Dale says—"The Lord Jesus Christ, the Moral Ruler of the human race, instead of inflicting the penalties, has submitted to them; He has 'died, the Just for the unjust,' and has been 'made a curse for us.' This supreme act becomes ours—not by formal imputation—but through the law which constitutes His life the original spring of our own."[1]

He did not merely confess our sin; He did not merely acknowledge that we deserved to suffer.

He endured the penalties of sin, and so made an actual submission to the authority and righteousness of the principle which those penalties express. What we had no force to do, He has done; and through our union with Him, His submission renders our submission possible.[2]

Dale held, therefore, that the Death of Christ is the objective ground on which the sins of man were remitted, first, because "His submission is the expression of ours, and carries ours with it";[3] secondly, because "it rendered possible the retention or the recovery of our original and ideal relation to God through Christ, which sin had dissolved";[4] thirdly, because "it involved the actual destruction of sin in all those who through faith recover their union with Him";[5] fourthly, because in His submission "He endured the penalty instead of inflicting it."[6]

[1] *Atonement*, p. 422. [2] *Ibid.* p. 423. [3] *Ibid.* p. 430.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 431. [5] *Ibid.* p. 431. [6] *Ibid.* p. 432.

From this fundamental position as to the place and function of Christ, Dale's whole theology ought to be construed. To him the Supreme Moral Authority of our race was also its only Redeemer. The very act of Redemption was a vindication of the authority; in all He did and suffered His authority was implicit and active. For he believed that mankind had been created in Christ, and redeemed through Christ, and lived only in Christ. This was the ground of his never obtruded, but cautiously expressed and clearly held conviction that Immortality was possible only to those who were in Him; and that to be out of Him was to be in a state which had so much of the essence of death within it as to be incompatible with continued being. He was too clear a thinker and too sober-minded a man to allow a subordinate inference to appear as if it were the regulative principle of his thought. But we should not be accurately expressing his whole mind if we did not bring out the fact that his attitude on what is known as Conditional Immortality was due to his belief that as man had been created in Christ and redeemed by Him, he had no life save in Him, and it was not worthy either of the justice or of the mercy of God to tolerate to all eternity a dead universe or a dead limb in a universe which He had expressly redeemed from death.

From the same high principle came his conception of the Church. It was the body of Christ, filled by His fulness; its life was His life, and in it whatsoever was not of Him was of sin. The Church was to him the great organ for the extension of Christ's life, for the cultivation of the virtues that pleased Him, and for the realisation of the ideals that formed His ultimate ends. He thus believed intensely in the independence of the Church from the State; this followed directly from his conception of the Headship. The Redeemer was so sovereign in His own house that His Will must be supreme, conditioned and over-ridden by no one without, while honoured and obeyed by all who were within. He disliked the control of the State because it was the control of a body mixed alike as

regards the citizens or units composing it, the means it used, the laws it enforced, and its mode of enforcing them, exercising authority often by unspiritual instruments, tempting by secular rewards, and appealing to motives that could not be described as religious. He believed that the Church could best serve the State by being free, able to speak with the voice of its Master, to command with His authority, and to seek nothing but the realisation of His ideals. He distinguished indeed clearly between his rights as a citizen and his duties as a churchman. He believed that to be a Christian was to be bound by the holiest of all obligations to fulfil effectually and diligently all the duties he owed to the society in which he lived. He held that to serve the State in which he dwelt was to honour the King of Kings. And he thought that the saving of society was to come from its religious men obeying in time the Will that governed Eternity. He thus believed that the sovereignty of Christ over him as man and citizen equally required that the means and the methods of the State should not invade the conscience or the province where Christ reigned. The provinces were so far coincident, but the coincidence never became identity or co-extension ; the religious realm was conceived as that which ought to penetrate and organise the State, but the State was not conceived as the realm which could penetrate the religious and legislate for it, because it could not do this without turning the Church into one of its own sections or departments. In no respect, therefore, was he more zealously carrying out his high belief in the sovereignty of the Son of God than when he pleaded for the supremacy of the Church within its own sphere. That sphere, so far from being curtailed, was immensely enlarged by his doctrine of the Church's independence, for to him the independence from the State meant the reign of the absolute law impersonated in Christ over the whole intellectual and social, civil and moral life of man.

But just because he thus conceived Christ's supremacy he also believed that He had endowed His Church with all

the agencies and all the means necessary to fulfil its mission in the world. Its great need was growth in Grace, the progressive incorporation of His mind and spirit. As a means to this end he conceived the Sacraments. Baptism was the assertion of His claim upon the child, and the recognition of the claim by both the family and the Church. The Lord's Supper was the perpetual memorial of His death; it was a kind of perennial endowment of the Church with His presence—a spiritual presence, indeed, but therefore all the more real. Men were to come to it not that they might give, but that they might receive. Through its symbols the Saviour gave Himself. He who received entered into a richer fellowship with Him, realised His presence in the symbols and in the society by which they were at once preserved and administered. And as with the Sacraments so with the Ministry. He was most jealous of its spiritual character. He feared the materialism that lay in theories of official succession. He believed in the inward vocation to the Ministry; the man was called by a living voice which came direct from the invisible, and was God's command to him who stood in His secret to speak in His Name. And as the Ministry stood thus related to God it implied a relation of equal intimacy to His people. It was through the people that the outward call came; it was in their bosom that the minister lived; their common function was to make the Church change, discipline and save the world.

Since he thus conceived Christ and the Church, he also believed that the whole field of morals came within their province. He had in this respect the real soul of the Puritan in him. There was no danger of his magnifying a cloistered and fugitive piety, unexercised and unbreathed; he was indeed possessed by a passion for conduct. Moral integrity was the very note of his life, but his morality was no love of the expedient, or conformity with the conventional; it was the reign of an absolute ethical will over the whole man, the whole Church, the whole State, and the whole of life. His practical sermons have in this

respect an extraordinary strength and dignity in them. His moral teaching has all the passion and cogency of his evangelical. His book on *The Ten Commandments*, his *Commentary on James*, his lectures and his sermons all show the same intense ethical sense, which yet was altogether religious ; they express and enforce the ideal of a life that was godly in proportion as it was beneficently human.

And in the same way we have to interpret his apologetic thought. His argument from experience was no mere transient and unrelated individualism ; it was the experience not simply of a single man, but of the collective Church through all the Christian centuries of its existence. What Jesus was to him, He had been to all saints, and this was a fact which no criticism could dissolve and no rationalism evaporate.

Dale had the mind of the thinker more than of the historian, and so his contributions were to thought rather than to criticism, more to theology than to history. But he had the most living interest in critical and historical questions, and when he looked at them through his central principle—the being of all things in Christ and consequently of life only in Him—he could be as brave as he was cautious. He felt that the whole life of man illustrated and verified the continued life of the Redeemer, and from the security afforded by this Rock he was prepared to look with a clear and undisturbed eye on those critical movements that had created in the more timid dismay, and in the less stable exhilaration and anticipation of revolution.

On the whole, when we survey Dale's work as a theologian, we are forced to say that our generation has had no abler interpreter of Evangelical thought. His conspicuous merit was a depth that was never narrow and a breadth that was never shallow. He was manysided, rich in his interests, vivid in his speech, clear and compact in his thought, masterly in his collective influence. Were we to select a word to express his most distinctive quality, we should say he was *massive;* but his massive-

ness was homogeneous, expressing a rare unity and integrity of nature, and representing in its outward being the character and the convictions of as honest a man and as distinctive a thinker as these later times have known.

CHAPTER XXVIII

REMINISCENCES OF DR. DALE

By Dr. Guinness Rogers

It is close upon forty years ago since my intimacy with Robert William Dale, which I have always regarded as the great friendship of my life, commenced. Our fellowship has been very intimate, very close, and I can truly say was never, during the long period over which it extended, shadowed by a solitary cloud of distrust. That does not mean that we never differed in opinion. Our differences were many—indeed I have often said to him that I thought they were more numerous than our agreements. He would never assent to this, but there was more truth in it than he was at all disposed to admit. He loved to dwell on our unity, and so did I; but the great charm of our friendship was that it was unity in variety. I well remember a brief talk on the point on the evening of the loving welcome which was given him on his return from Australia. I had said what I have written. Looking very serious as we were enjoying a smoke together in the quiet of his study, he said, "What are the points on which we do not agree except Home Rule and to some extent politics generally?" That was itself a very serious exception considering how keen was the feeling on both sides at the time, but, as I shall have occasion to show afterwards, it never disturbed our personal relations. But I soon satisfied him there were other subjects on which our opinions were divergent. They did not at

any time cause more than a momentary ripple on the even flow of our intercourse. That they could produce any real difference in our sentiments towards each other was impossible. The simple fact was: each had absolute trust in the other, and so amid all diversities we retained a love which made our friendship closer even than a brotherhood.

The circumstances under which this intimacy commenced were peculiar. Once on talking them over with him he reminded me that even before the point at which our friendship began we had been not only acquaintances but allies. Our first meeting was in the Broad Street Chapel, at the Assembly of the Union, when one moved and the other seconded a motion against what had been, up to the time, the official policy of treating the affairs of the Home Missionary Society as part of the business of the Union and discussing them at the General Assembly. The practice had not helped the Home Missionary Society, and at the time it was seriously interfering both with the peace and efficiency of the Union itself. The evil had reached an acute stage, and it seemed to us, perhaps growing now possibly too confident in our own judgment after the fashion of our kind, that there was only one remedy, *Ense recidendum est.* We suggested that it was time to end the connection, and carried the Assembly with us. No doubt we earned the criticism passed then as now upon presumptuous youths; but we did what we believed to be right and were justified by the result.

I have not myself a very vivid recollection of the circumstances, but my friend liked to refer to them as being our introduction to each other. I have a more abiding remembrance of the meeting to which I trace the unbroken friendship of after years. I was living at the time at Ashton-under-Lyne, and was preparing for bed, when I was unexpectedly called to the front door. I am not clear whether the first summons was not given by means of gravel thrown at the window. I at once obeyed the call, and to my surprise, but still more to my pleasure,

found Dale standing at the door. He was going to an ordination at Hyde, but found himself stranded at Guide Bridge, apparently without any prospect of finding a resting-place for the night. It was an awkward predicament, but he proved quite equal to it. It struck him that my house was not very far off. He at once "made tracks" for it. The incident is worth relating, because it illustrates the absolutely sincere and unconventional character of the man, and still more because it shows how strong was the attraction to each other even at that period.

Our early intercourse could not well be very close. We met at Union meetings, occasionally we might interchange a visit, but communication between Birmingham and Ashton was not frequent, and it was not until after my removal to London in 1865 that we were thrown much together. The Education controversy of 1870 brought us into closer and more frequent intercourse. We were, from the outset, in full agreement on points of principle, and from that principle neither of us ever swerved. We might not always agree as to the application of it to questions of detail, which of course have always been arising, but from the first we based our contention on the impossibility of the State giving religious instruction without doing injustice to some sections of the community. I am not sure that Dale would not have been more "irreconcilable" than I am myself in the practical enforcement of this view. At all events, I can safely say that he would never have acquiesced in any "compromise" as a satisfactory solution of the difficulty.

In that practical wisdom which suggests a *modus operandi* in such difficulties, Dale was never lacking, but he never allowed a desire for the settlement of a pressing difficulty to betray him into even a momentary disloyalty to principle. He believed, and therefore spoke and acted without anxious care as to the consequences of speech and action. I remember a light and yet significant play of argument between him and his old

fellow-student and friend Eustace Conder, in which each was anxious to vindicate the logic of his position. On both sides there was something to be said, and in truth the verdict might well have been claimed by either, provided his own premisses had been conceded. Experience, however, has since abundantly demonstrated that Dale was right, and that the Free Churches of the country have been seriously hindered in their work, while the progress of education itself has been retarded in consequence of the "halting between two opinions" which was the characteristic of Mr. Forster's policy.

The lapse of time induces a more kindly judgment on old opponents and the controversies in which we were their antagonists. It is possible that unwise words were spoken and hasty charges brought against Mr. Forster at that time by those who were intensely disappointed in a measure from which, as coming from a professed Radical, something so different had been expected. But so far as Dale and myself were concerned I do not believe that we had anything to regret in the spirit and mode of our advocacy. At the Education Conference in Manchester, indeed, I, with his full sympathy, emphatically declared that Nonconformists would never be satisfied while Mr. Forster remained Minister of Education. The scene that followed was a remarkable demonstration of the intensity of Nonconformal feeling on the subject. The excited assembly rose *en masse*, and made it abundantly manifest that in its view Mr. Forster and his policy must, at all costs, be resisted.

I am so far from being penitent that I would advocate the same course and do it with more emphasis to-day than I did then. I did not believe then that Mr. Forster was influenced by any unworthy motive. But, in common with my friend, I held that the measure was contrary to true Liberal principles, and would be unfriendly to the development of a national system worthy of the name. Beyond this we objected to the violation of the rights of conscience involved in any scheme of religious instruction, supported out of the public Exchequer, over which the

State exercised a certain control and for which, to that extent, it necessarily accepted responsibility. With this view Mr. Forster had no sympathy, and it was probably the surprise of finding one who had been regarded as the representative of Radicalism in the Cabinet so decided a supporter of an Erastian policy in education that provoked such keen indignation.

At all events, Mr. Forster and we were distinctly opposed on this crucial question, and it must be said that he was not at all given to conciliate his critics. There was a plain, out-spoken, Yorkshire bluntness about him which could very easily become extremely offensive. It was easy for those in sympathy with him to commend him as a straightforward antagonist; but when this meant an indifference to the courtesies which even so exalted a person as the Vice-President of the Council might be expected to show to men who, though they were members of a deputation, were in every other respect fully his equals, it was apt to become irritating. It was not possible that the vital differences of principle could have been bridged over by any grace of manner, but it is certain that the tone which the Minister adopted made his own task more difficult and infused a needless bitterness into the discussion. We were dealt with as though we had been the determined enemies of a Ministry which owed its existence to our disinterested support. It has often been the lot of Nonconformists. The Liberal leaders have had no more steady adherents, and we have received the treatment only too often accorded in political contests to tried friends whose unfaltering loyalty renders it unnecessary to study their wishes and secure their support by attention to them. Mr. Forster was largely responsible for the disaster which overtook the party in 1874, and which would have been even more complete had not strong Liberal sentiment overcome the strong resentment felt by numbers, and, I must also add, had not personal devotion to the great chief made them pass over the faults of his subordinate.

An incident in my own experience will illustrate this.

I say nothing of the fact that personally I threw myself into the contest of 1874 as earnestly as though I had never fretted against the reactionary and clerical tendency of Mr. Forster's Bill. I happened to be out of health at the time of the Dissolution; but when one of my former Dissenting opponents came and solicited my help, I shook off my weakness and threw myself into the fray. In the course of it I was waited upon by a gentleman—an earnest Dissenter—who though a zealous member of the Tabernacle, did not share Mr. Spurgeon's opinions on the subject. He told me that he represented a number of City electors, who were hesitating whether they should mark their disapproval of Mr. Forster and his measure by voting against Mr. Goschen in the City, and who were anxious to have my views on the subject. My reply was prompt. I had not even at that date any belief in Mr. Goschen's Liberalism; but he was the champion of the party to which I belonged, and I could not allow difference of view on a particular measure to make me desert the old leader and the old flag. As with me, so doubtless with numbers of others. The returns were enough to show how much had been lost by the chilling of Nonconformist zeal; but they would have been even worse if, at the last hour, the old feeling had not reasserted itself, and many who had been sufficiently pronounced in the "Nonconformist revolt" had not buried their grievances and rallied to their illustrious chief, under whom they had marched to victory in the past and were destined to do so in the future.

It is necessary to revive these memories, because the history of our own times is so little known that the most extraordinary fictions are continually accepted as true. Thus it is generally supposed that we were parties to a compromise, and this notion has been improved on of late by a confident assertion that this compromise was practically the establishment of the Nonconformist creed. Of course it is nothing of the kind. Needless to say it leaves a School Board free to have no religious teaching at all. All that it provides is that if it be

given, it shall be kept free from sectarian elements. To put it in a sentence: it allowed a Board to adopt the old system of the British and Foreign School Society, and as it had been largely supported by Dissenters, it was assumed to embody the Nonconformist creed. The fallacy lay in the implied idea that we were determined to insist on the teaching of our own distinctive views in the school, and, in truth, were only waging a battle for sectarian interests. Nothing could have been more contrary to fact. Our one desire (I am speaking now of those who were in sympathy with Dale and myself) was to exclude sectarianism altogether, and to secure the establishment of a really national system of education. For this we were at the time accused of all kinds of offences against religion, and now we are supposed to have been parties to a compromise by which a Nonconformist creed is to have the sanction and support of law.

The arrangement, however, was carried without our vote and in opposition to our persistent resistance. On this point my friend never altered the attitude he took at first. He was not even prepared to go as far as I have done, that is, to treat the controversy as a *chose jugée*, and to do battle for it rather than let some worse thing come upon us. That this must be the result of creating a diversion by the advocacy of an abstract principle which the vast majority of the people have never been able fully to understand I could not doubt, and I have been willing therefore to resist changes in the existing system. But Dale did not agree with what he possibly regarded as an Opportunist policy. In one of the last talks I had with him on the subject I found him as unwilling to make a solitary concession as at first. His education policy was the logical outcome of his definite and decided convictions as to the relation of the State to religion. It would not have been easy to find a man who had more thoroughly grasped the great principle embodied in the text of John Robinson's celebrated sermon, "I was ashamed to ask of the king a guard of soldiers and horsemen." Those who might be disposed to regard some

of its applications as extreme were bound to respect the consistency with which it was always maintained, even though some of the consequences might be practically inconvenient. If there was any difference of views between us on the subject it was simply this. The interference of Government with the affairs of a Church I should regard as an outrage on conscience, in which there must not even be silent acquiescence. A public endowment of religious teaching I should oppose alike on political and religious grounds; but if left in a minority should at all events endeavour to make the teaching as broad and catholic as possible. Dr. Dale was not disposed to make even this concession.

This pronounced attitude on ecclesiastical questions makes his action in our Disestablishment campaigns easily intelligible. The idea of the movement was struck out in a walk on the Hastings promenade. We had arranged to spend two or three days in retreat at that beautiful spot. As it happened, I was detained for a night in town by a meeting of the Liberation Society, and not unnaturally one of our early conversations turned on its work and prospects. I am not sure from whom the suggestion of a series of meetings for the purpose of drawing public attention to the subject emanated; but if I remember right the original thought was mine, and gradually it was beaten out into a proposal we made to the Society, and which it heartily welcomed. It is only fair here to say that nothing could exceed the energy and tact with which the arrangements were carried out. We placed our services at the disposal of the Committee, leaving with them to fix the towns we were to visit, and in general to attend to the details of the meetings. That part of the work was done with singular efficiency.

Looking back upon the campaign I cannot wonder if some regarded it as of a Quixotic character. Perhaps this was so, to some extent, and perhaps, also, that was one of the secrets of such success as it achieved. For ourselves we thought of it, I can honestly say, as a propaganda mission and nothing more; and the widespread

interest which it awakened greatly astonished ourselves. Possibly some outsiders, and especially those in the opposite camp, regarded it as a part of some deep-laid design in which probably some political party was interested. It certainly would not have been unreasonable to suppose that the Liberation Society had resolved on some decided move, and that this was the preparation for it. Whatever conjectures of the kind there were, were beside the mark. There was really no design at all. The whole history and natural history of our movement is told by the Apostle in the simple record of his own missionary work, "We believed, therefore have we spoken." We went forth sowing seed, not knowing which should prosper, whether this or that, or whether both should be alike good.

Our motive was, at all events, honest, and our action was quite consistent with the highest possible esteem for those from whom we differed. We were assailants of a system, not of the men who were identified with it, and I venture to think that our attack was defective rather than excessive in its severity. This, indeed, was the opinion expressed by an eminent clergyman at dinner at my own house on an evening preceding one of our meetings: "Had I undertaken the work," he said, "my criticism would have been much more trenchant." That opinion has often been recalled to my mind while reading the letters and speeches called forth by the recent Ritualist controversy. I find one of the writers, who describes himself as "a Churchman" *par excellence*, saying: "The Church of England has been revelling in lawlessness of one sort or another from the days of the Reformation." I doubt whether either of us ever said anything quite so sweeping. Indeed, with the eminent examples which have been furnished of late, we might probably have produced a more effective indictment than we did. We, as Dissenters, have been so accustomed to grievances that we may be more patient in endurance than the members of the Establishment, the different parties in which are keenly sensitive to any real or supposed wrong inflicted upon themselves, while utterly

insensible to the gross injustice which the system inflicts upon the whole body of Nonconformists.

There was no special reason why we should undertake this work. We had no personal grievances to be redressed nor selfish ambitions to be gratified. We should have been short-sighted indeed had we not foreseen the antagonism we were sure to excite and the manner in which it was likely to affect us. I doubt, however, whether either of us took this into account. For my comrade I can confidently say that his service to truth was conceived in a spirit so absolutely self-forgetful that it never stopped to forecast possible consequences. In all our conversations on the subject this was a point which was never even broached. We thought that there was need for a distinct deliverance on the Nonconformist side, and though it was sure to involve sacrifice and opprobrium we did not hesitate to undertake it.

It must in fairness be added that we were not animated by any bitter antagonism to the Anglican Church or its clergy. We had our own theological and ecclesiastical attachments, and we were prepared to give all possible service to the churches we loved. But neither inclination nor a sense of duty would have led us to engage in an attack upon another Christian community in the hope that we might thus advance the interests of the Church. The matter of our several addresses has, of course, long since passed out of my recollection; but I think I can safely say that we dealt exclusively with the faults belonging to an Establishment whatever its special constitution or teaching. No doubt this necessarily led us sometimes on to theological ground, but it was simply to refute the pleas which have been urged on behalf of the institution. We heard more in those days than we do now of the State Church as the great bulwark of Protestantism; and while denying that that would be any justification for its continued existence, and contending that the Protestantism which could only be preserved by Acts of Parliament was not worth preserving, we traversed the plea altogether, and in doing so, of course,

had to deal with some sectarian questions. But this was only in the natural course of argument. Neither of us would have been tempted away from other pursuits, from churches we loved, and from studies in which we could have found far more interest than in long railway journeys or exciting public meetings for the gratification of sectarian passion. On one point our efforts were concentrated, and that was the independence of the Church of all political authority.

Mr. Leslie Stephen quotes a story of Charles Buller from Jowett's biography, that on one occasion, when talking on the subject of Disestablishment, he said, "Destroy the Church of England! You must be mad; why, it is the only thing between us and real religion"; and adds, "Free the Church, that is, from the fetters of Parliament and lay jurisdiction, and you will lay it open to the fanatics." There is doubtless much truth in the epigram, and if for "real religion" we read "fanaticism," Jowett might have accepted the saying. Here is sufficient justification for our action. Of course, it is the Establishment of which Buller was speaking. The Church in it is not to be destroyed, and certainly ours would not have been the hands to take part in sacrilegious work of the kind. In all the spiritual movements within the Anglican Church both of us took a deep interest, and we had a clearer insight into the views of the Tractarian school, and more of sympathy with whatever elements of good were in its representatives, than the majority of New Evangelical brethren. I have no wish to claim credit for more liberality than we possessed, still less to seem insensible to the mischievous drift of a school which, despite all its protests, is distinctly Romish in character; least of all to affect a latitudinarian tone. But I am desirous to clear ourselves of any suspicion of *odium theologicum* or *ecclesiasticum*. We had a very strong and fixed conviction that the Establishment was hostile to the interests which should be most dear and sacred to all Christians. What Mr. Buller, or Mr. Leslie Stephen as his interpreter, might regard as fanaticism we held to be in many cases

vital religion, and we firmly believed that the influence of the Establishment was unfavourable to its growth. This was the secret of our action. It was in no sense a crusade for a sect; it was an earnest endeavour for the emancipation of religion from the trammels of human law, the true character of which was concealed by the gilding of wealth and power.

Those expeditions, followed as they were by others with more purely denominational ends in view, remain among the most cherished memories of my life. They were the periods of closest and most intimate intercourse between us, and it is pleasant to think that there is not a single cloud that darkens the retrospect. I have often wondered how we came to be so closely allied, for there were many diversities both in opinion and in temperament, albeit we at times used to come across points of agreement where perhaps it was least to be expected. Certain it is that the hearts of David and Jonathan were not more knit to each other. These expeditions were among the chief instruments in welding our friendship into so close a bond. When it was at all possible we used to travel together, and for the most part arranged to stay at an hotel, so that we might have the freest opportunities of fellowship. By degrees we came to such a thorough mutual understanding that we learned almost by intuition when was the time to speak and when the time to keep silence. I remember occasions when we travelled or sat together for hours with hardly the interchange of a word, and then the interval of quiet would be followed by long and earnest talk on some matter of mutual interest. They were happy and also profitable times—red-letter days in the records of life.

Of course we had some amusing incidents, though hardly so many as might have been anticipated. On the whole we had not much reason to complain of the defenders of the Establishment, who, with some notable exceptions, left us severely alone. Unfortunately any opposition we had to encounter was of the rowdy type. Had some ecclesiastic invited us to a formal discussion, we

should, I think, have been inclined to welcome the challenge. But all that we had to encounter was noisy interruption, sometimes becoming of a violent character. I remember at Leicester a knot of youths immediately in front of the platform keeping up an incessant fire of senseless remarks, until, after having stood it for some time, I said quietly that in my younger days there were dame schools at which twopence extra was charged for manners, but it was clear that in the case of these disturbers the fee could not have been paid. The audience responded very heartily, and the noise ceased. At Liverpool we had to face a much more persistent and riotous opposition. I have before me a picture of Mr. Caine, our chairman, who was trying to quell the storm, suddenly pausing and taking off his coat, which he proceeded to hang up. The action was so unusual that I looked somewhat uneasily for the next step, fully expecting that he was going to lay the strong hand upon one of the offenders. It was a relief to find that he was only changing his coat, which had been defiled by a rotten egg thrown by one of the audience. At Bristol, however, our chairman did actually undertake to eject one who would not obey his ruling, but persisted in disturbing the meeting.

But I would rather dwell on some of the pleasanter aspects of the service. It had its own trials and difficulties, but among its compensations were the troops of friends whom we found everywhere. I suppose it would not be easy to make those who do not share our strong feelings on the subject understand how thoroughly we felt the mission to be a religious service. I have heard it spoken of indeed by sympathisers as though it were a kind of triumphal progress to which we had been called as to some special honour. Nothing could be further from the truth. It was undertaken as a "burden of the Lord" laid upon us. We believed, as I believe still, that the union of Church and State is a hindrance both to religious truth and political liberty, and we were moved to set these views before our fellow-countrymen. That is the

whole account of it. Call it fanaticism, presumption, what you will. It was at least an act of loyalty to conscience — the submission to a necessity we felt to be laid upon us.

Events prevented the gathering in of the harvest for which we had been sowing. Neither of us was so short-sighted, so ignorant of the strength of the institution which we assailed, so unable to estimate the indisposition of the English people to adopt extreme policies, as to expect speedy victory. We knew that the seed we were scattering, as others had scattered before us, could not be expected to bear immediate fruit, possibly not to bear much visible fruit in our generation. We did not pretend to do more than make some small contribution to the forces which were at work to secure the end we had in view. But we were hindered in the attainment of such results as we might have hoped for by the diversion of public attention to foreign politics, in consequence of the Bulgarian atrocities. It is not the only occasion on which the Nonconformist cause has suffered from a similar cause. In 1885 the Liberal party, recruited largely by rural representatives, seemed to be ready for some distinct advance in the direction of Religious Equality, when the intrusion of Home Rule not only blighted Nonconformist hopes, but wrecked the party. There is something more than mere coincidence in this. The subject of Disestablishment is so vast, so complicated, so interwoven with all kinds of political and social problems, that no statesman is likely to undertake it except under the pressure either of strong personal conviction or overmastering public opinion. All that we can do is to work constantly on the creation and wise training of that opinion. If we succeeded in helping on that work we did not labour altogether in vain.

On the subject of Home Rule my old comrade and I did not agree in opinion, though the difference never affected our mutual affection. When Mr. Gladstone's proposals were first started, I personally hesitated as to the position I should take. I did not question the neces-

sity for Home Rule, but I shrank from any action which threatened the unity of the Liberal party. The position was surely a reasonable one, but it was one for which at the time there was little toleration on either side. The whole discussion was to me inexpressibly painful. I do not profess to have foreseen all the evils which have followed from a schism which separated men who had hitherto been so closely united, and had done such noble service in the cause of progress and humanity, but the anxiety with which I anticipated the rupture has been more than justified by the event. To some extent the division was inevitable. The Liberal party had reached a point where there was sure to be a "parting of the ways." In its ranks were those whose reforming tendencies had for the time been fully satisfied. This had been abundantly manifest in the Cabinet of 1880, and it is tolerably certain that in whatever direction advance had been proposed, there were some who would have fallen away from the host. It happened that Home Rule was the reform to which Mr. Gladstone gave precedence, and on it the division took place. Personally I viewed the prospect of schism with anxiety and alarm, and did my utmost to avert what I felt must be a serious evil.

I remember with pleasure that, though I stood alone, I raised my voice in opposition to the decisive resolution of the National Liberal Federation, which forced Mr. Chamberlain and his friends into revolt. I was as strongly convinced as any member of the Federation that the Liberal party must follow the lead of its illustrious chief. What I failed to see was how it could hope for success in a measure of extreme difficulty if its first step was to divide its own force into two hostile sections. I will not, indeed I do not know that I could, exactly say to what extent this feeling was strengthened by my shrinking from the idea of separation from my old friend. We had come together to the meeting, and though I must say that I saw little hope of restoring the broken concord in the party, I resolved to make the attempt. But it was futile. Feeling had been aroused which it was impossible

to allay, and the die was irrevocably cast. I have often wondered since whether those who were so eager to force on the division have been perfectly satisfied with their own handiwork.

But I am writing not of the Home Rule movement but only of its influence upon our mutual relations. Mr. Gladstone was very strongly affected by Dale's irreconcilable attitude on the question, and more than once referred to it in conversation. He had a very high opinion of my friend's ability and soundness of judgment, and, I am satisfied, was much more concerned at the opposition of men of his calibre to his Irish policy than at that of those in the thick of the political fight. To those who have had personal knowledge of him, Mr. Smalley's assertions as to the feeling with which he regarded Nonconformists are simply ludicrous. It is quite possible that they were a mystery, for it is certain that he did not regard their Dissent with favour, perhaps not even with tolerance. However that may be, he was not slow to recognise the merit of individual men, among whom Dr. Dale was conspicuous. He had been impressed and touched by the earnestness with which we had thrown ourselves into the crusade against Turkish tyranny, and had come to think of the "Nonconformist conscience" as, at least, a witness for national righteousness. Hence he was both surprised and disappointed when he did not meet with the same sympathy in his Home Rule policy. If ever a politician was possessed with a passion it was Mr. Gladstone in his righteous indignation against the wrongs which had been inflicted on Ireland by the Act of Union. He simply was unable to understand how those who were not affected by the prejudice of the ruling classes in this country could hesitate as to supporting a measure of redress.

However the feeling be explained, of its existence there can be no doubt. The defection of some Nonconformists deeply affected him. He never breathed a disparaging thought in relation to them, but more than once he expressed his keen regret. In one of his con-

versations there was a reference which had in it a touch of pathos. "Tell me," he said, "does your difference from Dr. Dale on Home Rule affect your old friendship?" "Not in the least," was my reply; "it has never caused a shade of misunderstanding between us." I at once saw how moved he was. "I am delighted," he replied, "to hear it. It is not so with me. Of all my former colleagues who have left me, there is only one with whom I remain on the old terms, and it will perhaps be a surprise to you to learn who that is. There is not a stouter Unionist among them all, but we continue friends. It is the Duke of Argyll." Perhaps the exception is not so difficult to understand. It is the men of strong and deep convictions who are most able to respect those who hold opposite views as firmly, as intelligently, and as tenaciously as they cling to their own.

Among all the evils which the Home Rule controversy has inflicted on Congregationalism there was none which came home so closely to myself as the position in which it placed Dr. Dale. That it did not affect his standing in the churches *cela va sans dire.* To the end he was admired, trusted, loved—I may truly say revered by all his brethren. The difference in political opinion, indeed, was taken much more seriously by him than by them. They simply looked upon it as a not unnatural divergence which they deeply regretted, and there was an end of it. To him it was a much graver matter. To begin with, I am bound to say that his opposition to Home Rule was more deeply rooted than their support. Its friends had not only to maintain the wisdom and justice of the measure itself, but also to vindicate the expediency of the time and methods of its introduction, and many who were convinced on the former had serious misgivings as to the latter. On his side Dr. Dale was a root-and-branch opponent who felt very deeply on the subject.

I well remember his breaking out in the most unexpected way at a fraternal gathering to which he had been invited as an honoured guest. A small ministerial

society had invited him and one or two other brethren who were in town for the May anniversaries to a social gathering. There was nothing political in the meeting. The large majority of those present were Home Rulers, but the subject had never been mentioned. Of course it was in the air; it always was in the air in those days; but we were all surprised when Dr. Dale, in acknowledging the toast of his health, referred to it in a very emphatic way. No one complained. Indeed we all were too glad to hear the loved voice, even though it was eloquent in its denunciation of views which were dear to us. The discussion was keen and eager, especially when the dinner was over and the conversation became more informal. Hannay (who was the most ardent and uncompromising champion of the Gladstone policy) and Dale were the protagonists. How gladly would one have those old controversies again if only we could have the old combatants back! The keen antagonism of opinion, however, did not produce alienation of feeling. All parted as we had met—staunch friends who trusted and loved one another.

A proof of this was given in the election of Dr. Dale as President of the International Council. The Home Rule struggle was at its height at the time, but that did not interfere with our rendering the honour to which we all felt he was so fully entitled. But Dr. Hannay was afraid lest he would refuse to accept the nomination, and he therefore requested me to support his appeal. Nothing could have pleased me more, and happily we found the task more easy than was at first anticipated. The only reason for any doubt on the subject was that Dr. Dale had not been present at the annual gatherings of the Congregational Union, where he had long been a conspicuous and honoured figure. It is not necessary that I go over again the incident at the Autumnal Assembly in Nottingham which had led to the temporary withdrawal. I thought it unwise, and pleaded with him to reconsider his decision. It is fair to him that I give his answer: "I am liable" (he said), "if I go to Congregational meetings,

to hear my Unionist friends attacked, and on the other hand, if I go to Unionist meetings, to hear you and those who think with you attacked. I think the wisest course is for me to absent myself from both." I did not agree in the conclusion, but I respect the feeling, and I quote the remark in order to remove the impression that his action might be due to some less honourable cause.

As illustrating the extent to which his consideration went and the chivalry which was behind it, I will refer to a slight personal incident. We were both guests at a lunch which our old friend Mr. Henry Wright was accustomed to give after the annual meeting of the London Missionary Society. At our side was an Evangelical clergyman who, with remarkably good taste, began an attack on us as Congregationalists because of our support of Mr. Gladstone. I was not indisposed for the fray, albeit I thought the arena was not a very fitting one; but before I could speak Dale was down on our critic. I cannot say he handled him very gingerly. I had only to sit still and listen to the trenchant and eloquent defence of my venerated leader as well as of my fellow-workers and myself. As we walked away I said to him, "My dear fellow, that certainly was an unexpected treat. I would gladly stand another attack in order to have such a defence. I never heard you champion Gladstone in such style before." "Ah," he said, "do you think I could hear you attacked and be silent?" There spoke his own true self. He was the most trusty comrade man could ever have. The story helps us to understand the resolution to which I have referred. He was in an awkward position, and as he could not sit silently by when friends were attacked, and of course did not want to be perpetually in squabbles, he remained apart.

But it would be folly to deny that it hung as a cloud over some years of his life, as no one outside his own family could understand quite as well as I did. I confess I wonder how even we were able to avoid misunderstanding, for he was, as it seemed to me, morbidly sensitive for his friends. The nearest approach to any difference

between us was caused by a remark of mine relative to a speech of Mr. Chamberlain's, in which he compared the Liberal party to the men of Tyre and Sidon who shouted that Herod was a god. In that case it appeared to me that Mr. Gladstone must be regarded as playing Herod's part, and I wrote accordingly. My friend was annoyed —as I thought somewhat unreasonably. But it was not even a passing breeze—at the worst, a mere breath, which was over at once.

Even the expression of it, however, may serve to show how deeply he was affected by a controversy which placed him in relations to his brethren which were abhorrent to his whole nature. For he was a very strong Congregationalist, and one who had very broad and enlarged conceptions of what was possible to Congregational churches, and was intensely anxious to realise them. To find himself shut out from active participation in their councils and their work by no act of his own, but simply by force of events over which he had no control, was an extremely painful experience. He was not so isolated as in morbid moods he fancied himself. His opinion was always taken on important movements, and the one eager desire on every side was to sweep away all misunderstandings by manifestations of love and honour which should show him beyond possibility of mistake that he lived in the hearts of the churches and their pastors. It has fallen to my lot to have some part in the arrangements of our committees for great public demonstrations. I doubt whether there was one for many years at which the first point mooted was not the possibility of inducing Dr. Dale to return. I think if he could only have known all that his brethren felt towards him it would have been a refreshment to his own soul in the many hours of weariness, solitude, and pain through which he had to pass.

For it must never be forgotten that during the years of which I am speaking disease was slowly but surely making its inroads on his system and colouring his views to an extent of which he was probably unconscious himself. He was never so robust as those who saw his

stalwart form and heard his clear and penetrating voice, but were not with him in a time of weariness after one of the speeches which had in them the ring of a giant's strength, were disposed to think. As I became intimate with him I learned to understand these elements, and when the actual collapse came was not so surprised as distressed.

The first time I was impressed with the gravity of his condition was on the Saturday previous to the International Council. I was preaching at the opening of a Baptist Chapel at Birmingham—the only occasion on which I ever knew a Saturday selected for such a service —and of course I went to lunch with him. It was a great distress, especially with the important engagements of the coming week in prospect, to find him suffering from a serious attack of illness. He, as was his wont until extreme weakness compelled the adoption of a different tone, took a cheerful view of his own condition, was sure that he was past the worst, and refused to entertain any idea of help in the engagements of the Council. This was not wonderful. In some respects it was a red-letter week in his life, and the tribute of respect and love paid to him in his election to the position was all the more welcome because of the sense of partial isolation which had brooded over him. But his whole appearance made me anxious, and my worst forebodings were more than confirmed by his subsequent illness. It was a cause for regret with his friends that he did not spare himself more during that memorable week, but it was impossible to persuade him. Some of the public duties he felt himself compelled to devolve upon others, and this he did with the more ease because he was surrounded by a little company of Vice-Presidents who were expected to take part of the service. But the constraint of his affection for friends led him to be present at some of the functions when it would have been wiser for him to have sought quiet and retirement.

During the long period of declining strength which followed I had several opportunities of intimate fellowship, the memory of which is very sweet though very sad. I

remember him once, when he was able, as he had been wont, to meet me at the Birmingham station, and his cheery words of greeting, with all the ring of his old heartiness in them, seem to sound in my ears now. It was one of the brighter intervals when there was a flickering of life and vigour which deceived himself and made even his anxious friends more hopeful. How bright he was, talking quite confidently of what he expected to do. "Why," he said, "I have become quite a visitor in these times," and he began to tell with great glee of what he had been able to accomplish in the way of pastoral visitation. The subject was one on which he was rather fond of chaffing me. "Well, Rogers," he would say, "have you got to the end of that interminable Wandsworth Road yet?" He had been with me one Sunday and heard the announcement that I would visit in the Wandsworth Road district during the ensuing week, and he loved to twit me upon it. I happened at the particular time to be in one of those fits of pastoral virtue which used to come upon me occasionally, but the exact value of which he rightly gauged. I have long come to feel that the work is impossible for any man who has to fill a pulpit in London, with all that gathers round it in the way of public duty. It is told of Mr. Binney that, having been criticised for lack of pastoral visitation, he devoted an entire week to the work, then told his congregation on the next Sunday morning that he was without a sermon. It is said that they complained no more. But the distraction and cares of a minister in Mr. Binney's position are multiplied indefinitely since that time. The remedy seems to be that a church should have two pastors. But that is not to be discussed now. I have been led into this digression by Dr. Dale's passing reference to his visitation. It was very pleasant to hear him talk of it, and of the joy he had felt in it. It is interesting altogether to refresh my recollection of his bright and hopeful views of himself and his work on that occasion.

In the midst of his family he ever sought to be cheerful, interesting himself in the passing incidents of the

hour. The most certain sign of his decline, and one which used to impress me very painfully, was his growing tendency to leave our happy group at an earlier hour. It was a sign of an increasing weakness which he was very desirous to conceal, but which the anxious care of friends could not fail to detect. It was pathetic to note the joy with which he hailed the slightest sign of renewed vigour, and attributed to it a significance which, alas! it did not possess. One evening a few months before the end, we went out together for a drive, and he was so full of spirit and life that as I listened to his cheery and sparkling talk I could almost have believed in the possibility of recovery. We prolonged our drive and arrived home later than had been expected. I at once saw that Mrs. Dale did not share my optimistic views, and the next day proved that she was right. His was a long and gallant struggle—hopeless, I fear, from the first—against an insidious disease which was steadily advancing.

The experience, especially to a man of his temperament, must have been very trying, but I never heard a murmur or note of repining from his lips. He always took a keen interest in the life of the day, and was ready to discuss any of its burning questions. Especially was he interested in all the work of the churches and in the affairs of his old friends. But there were times when his conversation took a more personal turn, and when he gave his most sacred confidences with remarkable freedom and fulness. If it had been possible that my estimate of his spiritual character could be enhanced, that would have been the effect of those self-revelations. The transparent simplicity, the unfeigned humility, the strong faith, the generous estimate of other men, the intense anxiety to be loyal to truth and right, the glowing warmth of heart—all spoke a man who had been much with Christ and learned of Him. Nothing impressed me more than the extreme conscientiousness with which he tested himself and his life-work.

His physical weakness sometimes gave a pessimistic colour to this review. I have heard the opinions which

he expressed in these periods of gloomy retrospect quoted as his deliberate judgment, but nothing could well be more unfair. In hours of weakness and solitude he was inclined to pass an adverse verdict on what he had been and done. Possibly all right-minded men might suffer from a similar tendency. It is simply the self-dissatisfaction which is the result of a lofty idealism combined with a painful and exaggerated sense of failure to reach its high aims. At such times Dr. Dale greatly underrated the extent of his work and influence, and was sometimes haunted by the thought that had he pursued another line of action, he could have done more for the Master. These questionings, be it remembered, had reference entirely to his own conduct. About the "greatest things," as he used to call them, there was no uncertainty or dimness of faith. But he was given to close and severe introspection, and owing partly to physical weakness, and partly to circumstances to which I have already referred, he was prone to self-depreciation.

My last visit to him is one to be remembered. The Free Church Council of Birmingham had asked me to a public reception, and he had promised to take part in it. He had not taken an active part in the work of the Federation, and for a time had looked on it somewhat dubiously, but when he was asked to join in honouring his old friend, he responded heartily and anticipated the gathering with the characteristic eagerness of his affectionate heart. The occasion was looked forward to with much interest. Our friendship was known, and our meeting under such conditions was an incident. The cards which were issued bore on them our photographs, and a large representative assembly of Birmingham Nonconformity was gathered. But, alas! he was not there, and though we struggled against any feeling of depression, the absence of one who was to have filled so conspicuous a place was a serious drawback from the pleasure of the evening. What was possible for him to do he did in fullest measure. The letter which was the substitute for the address he would have delivered was one of those outpourings of

brotherly affection which were very pleasant at the time, and which are doubly precious now that he is gone.

I will not linger over that visit, though all its details are vividly present to me. There was nothing to indicate that the end was so near, for though the signs of increasing feebleness were many, there was so much of life and brightness in his conversation that sanguine friends might hope that there was still some period of service before him. He was himself conscious that it could not be long, and yet he evidently looked forward to work still to be done. His wife, intensely anxious about every point that could affect his health, was expressing her regret that he exhausted himself so much in preaching. "Yes," he said, "that is true, but then I have so much to say and so few opportunities for saying it." The blade was really as keen as ever, but it was rapidly wearing out the scabbard.

It is not for me to draw a full-length portrait of a friend who, I could truly say, "more than a brother was to me." In him was a rare combination of qualities, both intellectual and moral. Look at him on one side and he might be a mystic, take him on another, and he was a keen, practical man of business. Hear him in one of his carefully prepared doctrinal sermons, and you recognise the subtle theologian who notes every subtlety of thought and shade of expression, and whose danger seems to be an over-refinement, possibly an excessive ingenuity which finds out differences where they were not intended. But listen to him in one of his great popular addresses on the platform when his soul is stirred to its depths and all his force employed to convince or persuade his audience, and you recognise an entirely different force. The chastened but impressive and finished rhetoric, the arguments forcibly presented and piled up with exquisite skill so as to produce the desired effect, the tremendous strength of appeal for which logic and illustration had prepared the way, marked him out as a great orator. But meet him in the committee room and you were at once struck not only with the breadth of his sympathy

and the sagacity of his general judgments, but also with his remarkable skill in the mastery of detail. Like all men of administrative ability he had a great power for getting at the heart of things, and was as sound in counsel as he was brilliant in exposition and forceful in appeal.

One of his marked characteristics which was to be seen in everything that he did was his thoroughness, and that, in its turn, was due to the supremacy which conscience exerted over him in every department of his life and work. This gave immense power to his oratory, whether in pulpit or on platform. He gave, and rightly gave, an impression of whole-hearted sincerity. And that impression was confirmed by all that he said and did. He was incapable of intrigue or of playing with great principles, and what he did, he did with both hands earnestly. As a student he went to the foundation of every subject he touched, and examined it on every side, and carefully as his opinions were formed, he would on the slightest provocation revise them again. Needless to say he was an independent thinker, and on some points reached conclusions in which he met but little sympathy from those most attached to him.

But I must not enlarge here, and I am not prepared to express all that I feel in relation to those higher spiritual qualities in which he was so pre-eminent. He was a rare—indeed, so far as my personal experience goes, unique—example of the union of the saintly temperament with the practical judgment. He might have been a mystic, finding his proper home in the cloister, but for the saving elements of common sense and strong affections which were such potent factors in his development. It may sound like a paradox, but it would be no exaggeration to say that he was an unworldly man of the world — that is, he understood the world and its tendencies, and was able to play a distinguished part in its great movements, but I never met a man more free from the taint of its spirit. He was a very Paladin of truth and righteousness—gallant, chivalrous, stainless, and

fearless. I do not try to say how I loved him, how I love him, and yet how I feel that with all my affection I failed to do complete justice to the childlike simplicity of his spirit, the purity of his aims and motives, and, most of all, the depth of his loyalty and affection as a friend.

APPENDIX

THE following list of Dr. Dale's publications does not profess to be complete. It does not include, for instance, the numerous sermons published with or without revision in the *British Weekly*, the *Christian World Pulpit*, and elsewhere, or the short political articles in the *Congregationalist*. But it contains all his most important work, so far as it can be traced. Posthumous publications are distinguished by an asterisk.

BOOKS

1846 The Talents. Aylott & Jones.
1861 Life and Letters of J. A. James. Nisbet.
1865 The Jewish Temple and the Christian Church. Hodder & Stoughton.
1866 Discourses delivered on Special Occasions. Hodder & Stoughton.
1867 Week-Day Sermons. Strahan; Hodder & Stoughton.
1872 The Ten Commandments. Hodder & Stoughton.
1875 The Atonement.[1] Hodder & Stoughton; The Congregational Union of England and Wales.
1877 Nine Lectures on Preaching. Hodder & Stoughton.
1880 The Evangelical Revival. Hodder & Stoughton.
1882 The Epistle to the Ephesians. Hodder & Stoughton.
1884 Laws of Christ for Common Life. Hodder & Stoughton.
1884 Manual of Congregational Principles. Congregational Union of England and Wales.[2]
1889 Impressions of Australia. Hodder & Stoughton.
1890 The Living Christ and the Four Gospels.[3] Hodder & Stoughton.
1891 Fellowship with Christ. Hodder & Stoughton.
1894 Christian Doctrine. Hodder & Stoughton.
1895 *The Epistle of James and other Discourses. Hodder & Stoughton.
1895 *Christ and the Future Life. Hodder & Stoughton.

[1] Translated into French and German.
[2] Books I. II. published separately as *Congregational Church Polity* (1885).
[3] The first five lectures are translated into Japanese.

PAMPHLETS, ADDRESSES, SERMONS, ETC.

PUBLISHED SEPARATELY

1854 The Pilgrim Fathers: a Lecture delivered in Carr's Lane Chapel. Hamilton, Adams & Co.; Hudson, Birmingham.

1858 Hope in Death: a Sermon preached on occasion of the death of Rev. E. G. Glanville, of Warwick. Judd.

1858 The Stipends of Nonconformist Ministers, reprinted from the *Eclectic Review*. Ward & Co.

1859 The Funeral Services for John Angell James (Oration and Sermon). Hamilton, Adams & Co.; Hudson, Birmingham.

1862 Churchmen and Dissenters: a Lecture delivered in the Town Hall, Birmingham. Hamilton, Adams & Co.; Hudson, Birmingham.

1862 Nonconformity in 1662 and 1862: a Lecture delivered in Willis's Rooms, London.[1] W. Kent & Co.

1864 Genius the Gift of God: a Sermon delivered at Stratford-on-Avon in connection with the Shakespeare Tercentenary.[2] Hudson, Birmingham.

1864 The Living God the Saviour of all men: a Sermon delivered in Surrey Chapel, on behalf of the London Missionary Society.[2] Jackson, Walford, and Hodder.

1864 From Doubt to Faith: a Lecture delivered in the Music Hall, Birmingham, and in Exeter Hall, London, for the Y.M.C.A.[3] Nisbet.

1865 Physical Science and Religious Faith: a Sermon delivered in Carr's Lane during the visit to Birmingham of the British Association.[2] Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1867 The Politics of the Future: a Lecture delivered in the Town Hall, Birmingham. Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1869 Christ and the Controversies of Christendom: an Address delivered from the Chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.[4] Hodder & Stoughton.

1869 The Holy Spirit in relation to the Ministry, the Worship, and the Work of the Church: an Address *ibid.* Hodder & Stoughton.

1871 Payment out of the Rates of Fees of Children attending Denominational Schools: Speech delivered at the Birmingham School Board. Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

[1] Also published in a volume of Lectures by various Lecturers on the Bicentenary of 1652.

[2] Also published in *Discourses on Special Occasions*.

[3] Also published by the Y.M.C.A., in the yearly volume of Lectures by various Lecturers.

[4] Translated into Welsh, and republished in America.

1871 The Communion of Saints: a Sermon delivered at Swansea before the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Hodder & Stoughton.

1871 The Idea of the Church in relation to Modern Congregationalism.[1] Hodder & Stoughton.

1871 The Politics of Nonconformity: a Lecture delivered in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester. Nonconformist Association, Manchester.

1872 The Scotch Education Bill: a Speech delivered in Aberdeen. Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1872 Religious Teaching by School Boards perilous to the life and faith of the Nation: a Speech delivered in the Town Hall, Birmingham. Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1873 The Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill and the political policy of Nonconformists: a Speech delivered in Birmingham. Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1874 Protestantism: its Ultimate Principle: a Lecture delivered in Exeter Hall, before the Y.M.C.A. Hodder & Stoughton.

1875 Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey.[2] Hodder & Stoughton.

1875 The Day of Salvation: a Reply to the letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury on Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey. Hodder & Stoughton.

1878 Liberalism: an Address delivered as President of the Birmingham Junior Liberal Association. The Birmingham Junior Liberal Association.

1880 Atheism and the House of Commons: a Sermon delivered in Carr's Lane. Hodder & Stoughton.

1881 The Town Council and the Sunday Evening Lectures: a Sermon delivered in Carr's Lane. Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1882 Speech on the Bradlaugh Question: delivered at a Meeting of the "Eight Hundred." The Birmingham Junior Liberal Association.

1883 Oath or Affirmation? a Sermon delivered in Carr's Lane. Hodder & Stoughton.

1885 Religious Worship and Bible Teaching in Board Schools: a Letter to the "Two Thousand." Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1888 Birmingham School Board Contest, 1888: a Letter to the Ratepayers. Journal Office, Birmingham.

1889 Nonconformist Education: an Address delivered at Mill Hill School. Warren, Hall, and Lovitt.

1889 The Old Evangelicalism and the New: a Sermon delivered at Bath, in connection with the Centenary of Argyle Chapel. Hodder & Stoughton.

1890 The Responsibilities of Wealth: an Address delivered at the Opening of the Session of Mason College. Journal Office, Birmingham.

[1] Also published in *Ecclesia* (second series).

[2] Reprinted from the *Congregationalist*, March 1875.

1890 General Booth's Scheme: a Sermon delivered in Carr's Lane. Cornish Brothers, Birmingham.

LECTURES, ESSAYS, ETC.

NOT PUBLISHED SEPARATELY

1855 Sermon on occasion of the Jubilee of J. A. James. (Jubilee Services of J. A. James.) Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

1865 On the importance of some of our Students entering the Ministry as assistants or co-pastors. (Minutes of the Proceedings of the College Conference.) Jackson, Walford, and Hodder.

1870 Death Abolished: a Sermon delivered at Trinity Chapel, Poplar. (Funeral Service for Rev. George Smith.)

1870 The Doctrine of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper. (Ecclesia, first series.) Hodder & Stoughton.

1872 Religious Instruction in Board Schools. (Report of a Debate at the Birmingham School Board.) Cornish, Birmingham.

1874 Sermon and Address in connection with the death of Rev. C. Vince. (In Memoriam, C. Vince.) Hodder & Stoughton.

1874 The Nonconformists: Christianity in Great Britain. (From the *Daily Telegraph*.) Hodder & Stoughton.

1875 Introduction to Petavel's Struggle for Eternal Life. Translation. Kellaway & Co.

1875 Free Schools. (Report of a Debate at the Birmingham School Board.) Cornish, Birmingham.

1875 Speeches on Disestablishment delivered at Bradford, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Norwich, and Derby. Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control.

1877 Speech on Disestablishment at Leicester. Journal Office, Leicester.

1878 Sketch of John Angell James. (Pulpit Memorials.) James Clarke & Co.

1882 The Early Independents: Jubilee Lectures in connection with the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Hodder & Stoughton.

1885 Introductory Essay. (Schmidt's *Social Results of Early Christianity*. Translated by Mrs. Thorpe.) Isbister & Co.

1891 Introduction and President's Address. (Report of the International Congregational Council.) James Clarke & Co.

1893 Biographical Sketch of Henry Rogers. (Superhuman Origin of the Bible. Eighth Edition.) Hodder & Stoughton.

EDITED

1872 *Reuss: History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age.* (Preface and Notes.) Translated by Annie Harwood. Hodder & Stoughton.

1872-1878 *The Congregationalist;* a Monthly Magazine. Hodder & Stoughton.
1874 The English Hymn Book. Hudson & Son, Birmingham.

THE BRITISH QUARTERLY REVIEW

1866 Anglicanism and Romanism (Apr.).
1866 The Moral Theory of the Atonement (Oct.).
1867 The Expiatory Theory of the Atonement (Oct.).
1868 Nonconformists and National Education (Apr.).
1870 National Education: The Union *versus* the League (Jan.).
1881 Congregationalism (Jan.).
1881 Congregationalism (Apr.).

THE CONTEMPORARY REVIEW

1868 Lacordaire—a Study (May).
1870 Mr. Matthew Arnold and the Nonconformists (July).
1873 The Nonconformists and the Educational Policy of the Government (Sept.).
1883 M. Gambetta: Positivism and Christianity (Apr.).
1883 The Leeds Conference (Nov.).
1886 The Exclusion of the Irish Members from the Imperial Parliament (June).
1887 The Liberal Party and Home Rule (June).
1889 Mr. Bright (May).
1888-89 Impressions of Australia (1888, Nov., Dec.; 1889, Feb., March, Apr.).
1890 The Seat of Authority in Religion (Sept.).
1891 Constance Naden (Apr.).

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1877 George Dawson, Politician, Lecturer, and Preacher (Aug.).
1878 Impressions of America[1] (March, Apr., May, July, Oct.).
1883 Cardinal Manning's demand on the rates (Jan.).
1883 The Cardinal and the Schools: a rejoinder (March).

THE ECLECTIC REVIEW

1856 Whateley's Edition of Bacon's Essays (Sept.). Dred, by Mrs. Stowe (Oct.). The Earnest Minister: a Life of Benjamin Parsons of Ebley (Nov.).
1857 Dove's Logic of the Christian Faith (Jan.). Harvey Goodwin's Hulsean Lecture for 1856 (Feb.). Kingsley's Two Years Ago (May). Christianity and Hinduism (May). Charlotte Brontë (June). Maurice on the Gospel of St. John (July).

[1] Republished in America.

Novels of the Season (July). Stoughton's Ages of Christendom (Aug.). Josiah Conder (Sept.). Greyson's Correspondence (Sept.). The Indian Mutiny (Dec.).

1858 Monthly Review of Public Events (Jan.-Dec.). The Positive Side of Modern Deism (March). The Future Government of India (May). Free Church Essays (June). The Stipends of Nonconformist Ministers (June).

1859 Our Theological Colleges (Jan.). Stanley on the Epistles to the Corinthians (Feb.). The Debate on Reform (Apr.). Ministerial Stipends (May).

THE FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

1879 Liberal Candidates at the next Election.

THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

1880 The State Support of Denominational Schools in England (Dec.).

1881 The State Support of Denominational Schools in England (Jan.).

THE CONGREGATIONALIST

1872 Congregationalism (Jan.). The Solitude of the Soul (March). Some Aspects of Modern Preaching: Do we preach Christ? (May). The modern Conception of Christ (June). The New Birth (June). Want of Urgency (July). The avoidance of Great Truths (Aug.). The Church the fulness of Christ (Aug.). Curteis's Bampton Lectures on Dissent (Aug., Sept., Oct.). Have we forgotten Christ? (Dec.).

1873 Religious Revivals (Jan., Feb., March, Apr.). The Bible a Library not a Book (Jan.). The alleged reaction in the Theology of Congregationalists (Jan.). Miracles (Feb.). Religious ideas of the Old Testament (May). The Old Testament and the New (June). A forgotten Ministerial Duty: Increase Gladness (Aug.). The relation of children to the Church (Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.).

1874 The Editor on his Travels, 1-12 (Jan.-Dec.). Prayer in relation to revivals (Jan.). The relation of children to the Church (Feb.). Why I ceased to use the title "Rev." (Feb.).

1875 The Editor on his Travels, 13-24 (Jan.-Dec.). The Paraclete (Feb.). Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey (March). The Revivalists and the Ministry (Apr.). Abbott's Hulsean Lectures on Faith and Science (Sept.).

1876 The Editor on his Travels, 25-34 (Jan.-Oct.). Parish Churches —to whom do they belong? (Jan.). The New Testament

theory of Sanctification, 1-11 (Feb.-Dec.). Unitarian Criticism on the Congregational Lecture for 1875, The Atonement (March, Apr., May). Wace's Boyle Lectures on Christianity and Morality (Apr.).

1877 On some aspects of Theological Thought among Congregationalists (Jan.). Parker's Priesthood of Christ (Feb.). John Angell James (Aug.).

1878 The necessity of an Ethical Revival (Jan.). The Forgiveness of Sins (May).

1879 To what extent have Special Missions or Revival Services been a blessing to the Christian Church? (Feb.).

1880 The New Year (Jan.). The organisation of the Sunday School (Aug.).

1881 Thomas Carlyle (March, Apr.).

1882 Christian men God's Workmanship (Sept.).

1883 The New Year (Jan.). Renan's Recollections (July, Aug.).

1884 The Moral Precepts of Christ[1] (Feb.). Obeying Christ[1] (Aug.).

1885 The Christian Sacraments and Christian worship (Jan.).

1886 A merry heart (Oct.).

1887[2] The old Antinomianism and the New (Jan.).

1890 The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Apr.).

GOOD WORDS

1867 Anger[3] (Feb.). Cheerfulness[3] (March). The Perils and uses of Rich Men[3] (Apr.). Amusements[3] (May). The Discipline of the Body[3] (June). The Kindly Treatment of other Men's Imperfections[3] (July). Summer Holidays[3] (Aug.). Unwholesome Words[3] (Sept.). Peaceableness and Peacemaking[3] (Oct.).

1882 Everyday Business a Divine Calling[1] (Jan.). The Sacredness of Property[1] (March, Apr.). Christian Worldliness[1] (May). Sowing and Reaping[1] (Aug.). The Grace of Christ a Law of Conduct[1] (Nov.). Christmas Day and Family Life[1] (Dec.).

1883 Fault-finding: the Mote and the Beam[1] (Feb.). The Forgiveness of Injuries[1] (Aug.).

1884 Public Duty[1] (March). The Christian Rule of Justice[1] (July).

1891 On Telling the Truth (May).

1893 At Home with the Lord (May).

1894 The Seed which fell by the Wayside (Oct.).

[1] Reprinted in *The Laws of Christ for Common Life.*

[2] In 1887 the *Congregationalist* appeared under a new title as the *Congregational Review.*

[3] Reprinted in *Week-day Sermons.*

THE SUNDAY MAGAZINE

1865 Tale-bearing[1] (July). Weights and Measures (Nov.).
1866 The Use of the Understanding in Keeping God's Law[1] (Oct.). Christmas Parties[1] (Dec.).
1867 The Character and Sin of Judas (Nov.).
1881 The Temperance Reformation: a Sermon preached in connection with the Temperance Union, in Carr's Lane Chapel, Birmingham (Feb.).
1884 Sympathy (Aug.).
1890 On Minding Things that are Lowly (Sept.).
1892 God's Guidance (June).
1895 Friendship* (June).

THE EXPOSITOR

Second Series

1883 St. James on Temptation (vol. v. pp. 321-329; 426-434).

Fourth Series

1892 Jonah (vol. vi. pp. 1-18).
1893 Sin (vol. viii. pp. 161-175).

Fifth Series

1896 The Tower of Babel* (vol. iii. pp. 1-14). A Spiritual House* (vol. iii. pp. 127-136). An Elect Race* (vol. iii. pp. 191-199). Christians and Social Institutions* (vol. iii. pp. 287-295). Like-minded* (vol. iii. pp. 349-357). Abraham* (vol. iii. pp. 434-444). The Sacrifice of Isaac* (vol. iv. pp. 16-26). The Intercession of the Spirit* (vol. iv. pp. 186-193). The Place of Abraham in Religious History* (vol. iv. pp. 338-350).
1897 The Syro-Phœnician Woman* (vol. v. pp. 365-372). A Voluntary Humility* (vol. v. pp. 464-472).
1898 The Fatherhood of God (vol. vii. pp. 56-69; 150-160). Judgment to come* (vol. viii. pp. 160-179).

THE EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE

1845 Channing's Essay on Self-Culture (June; Reprinted in April 1895).
1867 The Lord's Supper (Jan.-Dec.).
1890 On a Misuse of the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Apr., May).
1891 Our Responsibility for our Thoughts (Apr.).
1892 "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (a Sermon on 1 John ii. 23). (Apr.)
1895 Fellowship with us (Feb.).

[1] Reprinted in *Week-day Sermons.*

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